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FAITH
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CHRISTIAN
STANDARD
BIBLE

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BIBLES

CSB Ancient Faith Study Bible

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Brief summaries of each early church father found in the biographical index are adapted from the volumes listed above in the Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture series edited by Thomas C. Oden and are used by permission of InterVarsity Press. www.ivpress.com.

COMPILER'S NOTE

James Stuart Bell

I compiled all of the notes related to biblical commentary on the part of the Church Fathers from the twenty-eight volume *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture* (Thomas C. Oden as general editor; published by InterVarsity Press). The patristic period roughly begins with Clement of Rome in the late first century through sixth century, though the reader will find notes into the mid-eighth century from writers like John of Damascus. The distinguished and varied cast of scholars, editors, and translators for the original project included international backgrounds. As Thomas Oden states, "Under this welcoming umbrella are gathering conservative Protestants with Eastern Orthodox, Baptists with Roman Catholics, Reformed with Arminians and charismatics, Anglicans with Pentecostals . . ." (*Twelve Prophets*, p. xviii).

As an ecumenical project, the ACCS promotes a vital link of communication between the varied Christian traditions of today and their common ancient ancestors in the faith. On this shared ground we listen as leading pastoral theologians of six centuries gather around the text of Scripture and offer their best theological, spiritual, and pastoral insights. The vast array of writings from the church fathers—including much that is available only in the ancient languages—have been combed for their comments on Scripture.

From these results, scholars with a deep knowledge of the fathers and a heart for the church have hand selected material for each volume, shaping, annotating, and introducing it to today's readers. Each portion of commen-

tary has been chosen for its salient insight, its rhetorical power, and its faithful representation of the consensual exegesis of the early church.

All biblical Christians can lay claim to a legacy with strands dating back to the early church and its leading spokesmen. As is often stated in the original intentions of the projects, this commentary is designed for a general lay reading audience of nonprofessionals, although scholars and pastors will benefit from it as well. As we go back closer to the source of our Christian faith we strip back the layers to a pre-modern world view which is obviously much closer to that of Jesus and His followers.

My compiling efforts in terms of the Church Fathers have included choosing a wide number of doctrinal and spiritual perspectives from East and West, different exegetical approaches, various leadership positions in the church, and indirectly addressing overarching issues that faced each historical era of the early church. I found that over the four years I was involved in this project, perusing the twenty-eight volumes, that I was establishing a foundation, a bedrock of Spirit-inspired biblical interpretation, that I could then build upon with later centuries of erudition from those that tend to be more household names. I invite you, the reader, to strengthen your foundation as well, and you will have a greater appreciation of the later great biblical scholars from many traditions, who would freely admit that they too looked back to the Church Fathers as authorities and inspirations in regards to the Holy Scriptures.

INTRODUCTION TO THE CHRISTIAN STANDARD BIBLE

The Bible is God's revelation to humanity. It is our only source for completely reliable information about God, what happens when we die, and where history is headed. The Bible reveals these things because it is God's inspired Word, inerrant in the original manuscripts. Bible translation brings God's Word from the ancient languages (Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic) into today's world. In dependence on God's Spirit to accomplish this sacred task, the CSB Translation Oversight Committee and Holman Bible Publishers present the Christian Standard Bible.

TEXTUAL BASE OF THE CSB

The textual base for the New Testament (NT) is the Nestle-Aland *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 28th edition, and the United Bible Societies' *Greek New Testament*, 5th corrected edition. The text for the Old Testament (OT) is the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, 5th edition.

Where there are significant differences among Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek manuscripts, the translators follow what they believe is the original reading and indicate the main alternative(s) in footnotes. The CSB uses the traditional verse divisions found in most Protestant Bibles.

GOALS OF THIS TRANSLATION

- Provide English-speaking people worldwide with an accurate translation in contemporary English.
- Provide an accurate translation for personal study, sermon preparation, private devotions, and memorization.
- Provide a text that is clear and understandable, suitable for public reading, and shareable so that all may access its life-giving message.
- Affirm the authority of Scripture and champion its absolute truth against skeptical viewpoints.

TRANSLATION PHILOSOPHY OF THE CHRISTIAN STANDARD BIBLE

Most discussions of Bible translations speak of two opposite approaches: formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence. This terminology is meaningful, but Bible translations cannot be neatly sorted into these two categories. There

is room for another category of translation philosophy that capitalizes on the strengths of the other two.

1. FORMAL EQUIVALENCE:

Often called "word-for-word" (or "literal") translation, the principle of formal equivalence seeks as nearly as possible to preserve the structure of the original language. It seeks to represent each word of the original text with an exact equivalent word in the translation so that the reader can see word for word what the original human author wrote. The merits of this approach include its consistency with the conviction that the Holy Spirit did inspire the very words of Scripture in the original manuscripts. It also provides the English Bible student some access to the structure of the text in the original language. Formal equivalence can achieve accuracy to the degree that English has an exact equivalent for each word and that the grammatical patterns of the original language can be reproduced in understandable English. However, it can sometimes result in awkward, if not incomprehensible, English or in a misunderstanding of the author's intent. The literal rendering of ancient idioms is especially difficult.

2. DYNAMIC OR FUNCTIONAL EQUIVALENCE:

Often called "thought-for-thought" translation, the principle of dynamic equivalence rejects as misguided the attempt to preserve the structure of the original language. It proceeds by extracting the meaning of a text from its form and then translating that meaning so that it makes the same impact on modern readers that the ancient text made on its original readers. Strengths of this approach include a high degree of clarity and readability, especially in places where the original is difficult to render word for word. It also acknowledges that accurate and effective translation may require interpretation. However, the meaning of a text cannot always be neatly separated from its form, nor can it always be precisely determined. A biblical author may have intended multiple meanings,

but these may be lost with the elimination of normal structures. In striving for readability, dynamic equivalence also sometimes overlooks and loses some of the less prominent elements of meaning. Furthermore, lack of formal correspondence to the original makes it difficult to verify accuracy and thus can affect the usefulness of the translation for in-depth Bible study.

3. OPTIMAL EQUIVALENCE:

In practice, translations are seldom if ever purely formal or dynamic but favor one theory of Bible translation or the other to varying degrees. Optimal equivalence as a translation philosophy recognizes that form cannot always be neatly separated from meaning and should not be changed unless comprehension demands it. The primary goal of translation is to convey the sense of the original with as much clarity as the original text and the translation language permit. Optimal equivalence appreciates the goals of formal equivalence but also recognizes its limitations.

Optimal equivalence starts with an exhaustive analysis of the text at every level (word, phrase, clause, sentence, discourse) in the original language to determine its original meaning and intention (or purpose). Then, relying on the latest and best language tools and experts, the nearest corresponding semantic and linguistic equivalents are used to convey as much of the information and intention of the original text with as much clarity and readability as possible. This process assures the maximum transfer of both the words and the thoughts contained in the original.

The CSB uses optimal equivalence as its translation philosophy. In the many places throughout the Bible where a word-for-word rendering is understandable, a literal translation is used. When a word-for-word rendering might obscure the meaning for a modern audience, a more dynamic translation is used. The Christian Standard Bible places equal value on fidelity to the original and readability for a modern audience, resulting in a translation that achieves both goals.

THE GENDER LANGUAGE USAGE IN BIBLE TRANSLATION

The goal of the translators of the Christian Standard Bible has not been to promote a cultural ideology but to translate the Bible faithfully.

Recognizing modern usage of English, the CSB regularly translates the plural of the Greek word *ανθρωπος* ("man") as "people" instead of "men," and occasionally the singular as "one," "someone," or "everyone," when the supporting pronouns in the original languages validate such a translation. While the CSB avoids using "he" or "him" unnecessarily, the translation does not restructure sentences to avoid them when they are in the text.

HISTORY OF THE CSB

After several years of preliminary development, Holman Bible Publishers, the oldest Bible publisher in North America, assembled an international, interdenominational team of one hundred scholars, editors, stylists, and proofreaders, all of whom were committed to biblical inerrancy. Outside consultants and reviewers contributed valuable suggestions from their areas of expertise. Working from the original languages, an executive team of translators edited, polished, and reviewed the final manuscript, which was first published as the Holman Christian Standard Bible (HCSB) in 2004.

A standing committee was also formed to maintain the HCSB translation and look for ways to improve readability without compromising accuracy. As with the original translation team, the committee that prepared this revision of the HCSB, renamed the Christian Standard Bible, is international and interdenominational, comprising evangelical scholars who honor the inspiration and authority of God's written Word.

TRADITIONAL FEATURES FOUND IN THE CSB

In keeping with a long line of Bible publications, the CSB has retained a number of features found in traditional Bibles:

1. Traditional theological vocabulary (for example, *justification*, *sanctification*, *redemption*) has been retained since such terms have no other translation equivalent that adequately communicates their exact meaning.
2. Traditional spellings of names and places found in most Bibles have been used to make the CSB compatible with most Bible study tools.
3. Some editions of the CSB will print the words of Christ in red letters to help readers easily locate the spoken words of the Lord Jesus Christ.

4. Descriptive headings, printed above each section of Scripture, help readers quickly identify the contents of that section.
5. OT passages quoted in the NT are indicated. In the CSB, they are set in boldface type.

HOW THE NAMES OF GOD ARE TRANSLATED

The Christian Standard Bible consistently translates the Hebrew names for God as follows:

Hebrew original:	CSB English:
<i>Elohim</i>	God
<i>YHWH (Yahweh)</i>	LORD
<i>Adonai</i>	Lord
<i>Adonai Yahweh</i>	Lord God
<i>Yahweh Sabaoth</i>	LORD of Armies
<i>El Shaddai</i>	God Almighty

FOOTNOTES

Footnotes are used to show readers how the original biblical language has been understood in the CSB.

1. OLD TESTAMENT (OT) TEXTUAL FOOTNOTES

OT textual notes show important differences among Hebrew (Hb) manuscripts and ancient OT versions, such as the Septuagint and the Vulgate. See the list of abbreviations on page XVII for a list of other ancient versions used.

Some OT textual notes (like NT textual notes) give only an alternate textual reading. However, other OT textual notes also give the support for the reading chosen by the editors as well as for the alternate textual reading. For example, the CSB text of Psalm 12:7 reads,

You, LORD, will guard us;
you will protect us^A
from this generation forever.

The textual footnote for this verse reads,

^A12:7 Some Hb mss, LXX; other Hb mss read *him*

The textual note in this example means that there are two different readings found in the Hebrew manuscripts: some manuscripts read *us* and others read *him*. The CSB translators chose the reading *us*, which is also found in the Septuagint (LXX), and placed the other Hebrew reading *him* in the footnote.

Two other kinds of OT textual notes are

Alt Hb tradition reads _____
a variation given by scribes in
the Hebrew manuscript tradition
(known as *Kethiv/Qere* and *Tiqqune
Sopherim* readings)

Hb uncertain
when it is unclear what the original
Hebrew text was

2. NEW TESTAMENT (NT) TEXTUAL FOOTNOTES

NT textual notes indicate significant differences among Greek manuscripts (mss) and are normally indicated in one of three ways:

Other mss read _____
Other mss add _____
Other mss omit _____

In the NT, some textual footnotes that use the word “add” or “omit” also have square brackets before and after the corresponding verses in the biblical text. Examples of this use of square brackets are Mark 16:9-20 and John 7:53-8:11.

3. OTHER KINDS OF FOOTNOTES

Lit _____ a more literal rendering
in English of the
Hebrew, Aramaic, or
Greek text

Or _____ an alternate or less
likely English trans-
lation of the same
Hebrew, Aramaic, or
Greek text

= an abbreviation for “it
means” or “it is equiv-
alent to”

Hb, Aramaic, Gk the actual Hebrew,
Aramaic, or Greek
word is given using
equivalent
English letters

Hb obscure the existing Hebrew
text is especially diffi-
cult to translate

emend(ed) to _____ the original Hebrew text is so difficult to translate that competent scholars have conjectured or inferred a restoration of the original text based on the context, probable root meanings of the words, and uses in comparative languages

In some editions of the CSB, additional footnotes clarify the meaning of certain biblical texts or explain biblical history, persons, customs, places, activities, and measurements. Cross references are given for parallel passages or passages with similar wording, and in the NT, for passages quoted from the OT.

ABBREVIATIONS IN CSB BIBLES

AD	In the year of our Lord
BC	before Christ
c.	century
ca	circa
chap(s).	chapter(s)
cp.	compare
DSS	Dead Sea Scrolls
e.g.	for example
Eng	English
etc.	et cetera
Gk	Greek
Hb	Hebrew
i.e.	that is
Lat	Latin
lit	Literal(ly)
LXX	Septuagint—an ancient translation of the Old Testament into Greek
MT	Masoretic Text
NT	New Testament
ms(s)	manuscript(s)
OT	Old Testament
pl.	plural
Ps(s)	Psalm(s)
Sam	Samaritan Pentateuch
sg.	singular
Sym	Symmachus
Syr	Syriac
Tg	Targum
Theod	Theodotian
v./vv.	verse, verses
Vg	Vulgate—an ancient translation of the Bible into Latin
vol(s).	volume(s)

READING THE BIBLE WITH THE CHURCH FATHERS

Trevin Wax

Many years ago, I worked alongside a Sunday School teacher who insisted that he didn't need any curriculum or study helps. He just wanted to take his group through the Bible without any guidance. "Who needs a commentary or study notes? I just pray for the Holy Spirit to lead me to the right interpretation, and then I read it for myself."

Eventually, this teacher decided to tackle the last book of the Bible, Revelation. I wasn't a member of his class, but from what I heard, those sessions on the Bible's famous apocalyptic letter elicited some strange predictions. Members expressed frustration with the incoherence of the weekly study, as the teacher's "interpret as I go" approach led him frequently to revise things he'd taught in previous weeks.

The idea that Bible interpretation is only about "me and the Holy Spirit" is widespread in our time, and worrisome. It sounds super-spiritual on the surface, but it ignores the fact that Bible interpretation is never just about "me" but also about the Church. Likewise, the Holy Spirit doesn't just illuminate us today but has been at work in guiding Christians to understand and apply the biblical text for millennia. What's more, none of us approach the Bible as a "blank slate," without having first been formed by various influences to read the Scriptures in a certain way. We all have our biases, our prejudices, and our interpretive approaches even if we don't think we do. In fact, the most biased Bible readers are probably those who believe they have no biases!

Thankfully, many readers of the Bible recognize the need for guidance. For this reason, we consult study Bibles and commentaries or listen to preachers and scholars who have done extensive work in the original languages. But even here, it is possible to adopt a tunnel vision approach to the Bible, where we only consult *contemporary* commentators and preachers. Many of the leaders we listen to share our same cultural moment. Without intending to, we succumb to what C. S. Lewis called "chronological snobbery," the idea that Bible interpretation of an earlier era is inferior simply because it is

older. We unconsciously look down on ancient Christians, without realizing that it's on their shoulders we stand.

The *CSB Ancient Faith Study Bible* seeks to aid contemporary Christians in avoiding these problems. This study Bible is designed to introduce today's students of God's Word to the legacy we inherit from the earliest centuries of the church—men and women who studied the Scriptures diligently and relied on the Spirit as they sought to faithfully follow Jesus. This resource is designed to lift us up from our current cultural moment so that we can be refreshed by the insights and wisdom of ancient believers.

Engagement with the generations that have gone before us helps us recognize that we are not alone in our struggles today. We must not fall for the false idea that we face spiritual and cultural challenges on our own. In a fallen world, we may sometimes feel like we are embattled and pressed from all sides. But Hebrews 12 would have us see the world differently, to recognize that we are indeed surrounded, but not just by cultural challenges or the gospel's enemies. We are surrounded by the great cloud of witnesses. We stand in a long line of saints who have gone before us, who now are seated in the heavenly coliseum, cheering us on as we run the race before us.

The *Ancient Faith Study Bible* lifts our eyes from our current moment, so that we can listen to the words of the psalmist, hear the laments of the prophets, recall the stories of our ancestors, visit our church fathers, read and learn from our missionary mothers, and realize that we are not the first to struggle in our walk with Jesus. We belong to God's people throughout the ages.

The ancient Christians quoted throughout this study Bible were brilliant thinkers, but they were not mere academics. These writers were immersed in the life of the local church. Their involvement with God's people and their study of Scripture went hand in hand, influencing each other.

The *Ancient Faith Study Bible* reminds us that we are not the first to encounter these biblical

texts. The roots of our biblical interpretation go deep. By listening carefully to ancient church leaders, we come to understand that our faith is relevant not because it is “modern” but because it is rooted. The Holy Spirit is not stingy with spiritual insights. He has been at work for thousands of years. We see this truth clearly when we read ancient saints.

One of the aspects of the *Ancient Faith Study Bible* that will challenge you is the depth of biblical knowledge on display in the works of these writers. When you read a classic book like *Confessions* by Augustine, you are amazed to see how much it abounds in phrases and words and pictures that come from Scripture. The Scriptural citations and allusions fill the bottom of most of its pages. At times, entire paragraphs are the weaving together of Scriptural thoughts and analogies into new forms of expression. Augustine immersed himself in Scripture until it poured out of him in his prose. We need to be challenged by the diligence of the earliest students of Scripture. They had far fewer of the study tools that we do and yet knew the Old and New Testaments so well that biblical insights poured from their pens.

We also need to be challenged by the exegesis of the church fathers. There were several communities of biblical interpretation in the early centuries of the Christian Church. Two dominant schools, the Alexandrian and Antiochian, emphasized different truths about the biblical text, with the Alexandrian steering closer to an allegorical emphasis and the Antiochian steering more toward an historical approach. Neither community was exclusively to one side or another. All the early church fathers believed the Scripture had layers of meaning, especially as it relates to seeing Jesus Christ in all the Bible, even in obscure Old Testament narratives.

Irenaeus wrote, “If anyone reads the Scripture carefully, they will find some word, some hidden treasure in the field, which is Christ.”

Differing approaches to Scripture were at work back then, just like they are now. So be ready. As you read these study notes, expect to be challenged by these ancient interpreters. When Basil the Great finds application in a text that I would never see, I want to know why. It's not that I adopt the hermeneutical approach of the fathers in every case or that I agree with all of their interpretations. (Often, I don't.) Still, the depth of their convictions, the worshipful feel of their exposition, and the passion they bring to their preparation challenge my twenty-first century narrow-mindedness.

There are times when we will disagree with the Christians in previous generations, who had their blind spots just as we have ours. The church fathers are not inspired, but they are wise. Seen in this light, church history is a treasure box, not a map. We err if we look to the past in order to chart the precise path of faithfulness for the future. We are marching to Zion, not retreating to Constantinople. But we do look to the past in order to retrieve the resources we need to fortify and renew our faith in the present as we discern with wisdom and prudence the way forward. This is how we best honor those who have gone before us: learning from both their strengths and also their sins, and praying that we will be faithful today.

Timothy George calls this “retrieval for the sake of renewal,” and that is how the *Ancient Faith Study Bible* seeks to aid the church today. We believe today's church can be renewed by listening to yesterday's saints. We are not the first to encounter these texts. So, join us as we encounter a Christianity that stretches back through the ages, where a tomb is still empty.

CHRISTOLOGY OF THE ECUMENICAL COUNCILS

Fred Sanders

The ecumenical councils were gatherings of bishops from all over the Christian world in the early centuries of the church. Their judgments about Christology are the early church's most definitive statements of the Christian doctrine of Jesus Christ. The fourth council, Chalcedon, was so concise in its expression and comprehensive in its scope that it has achieved classic status, so that the early church's teaching about Jesus is sometimes called, in shorthand, Chalcedonian Christology. Here are some of the crucial elements of that classic, conciliar Christology.

COUNCIL OF NICAEA, AD 325

The first ecumenical council was held at Nicaea (modern Iznik, Turkey) in the year 325. As all the later councils are careful to affirm, the Council of Nicaea is of foundational importance. This council was provoked by the heresy called Arianism, which taught that the pre-existent Logos who took on flesh in the incarnation was not God, but a great and exalted spiritual creature. For Arians, the name "Son of God" entailed that the Son must be younger than the Father, and must have come into being from non-existence at some point.

Arianism was rejected by over 300 bishops gathered at Nicaea from around the ancient world, with the imperial approval of Constantine. Because Arius and his supporters could make use of most scriptural language in teaching their heresy, the orthodox party pressed into service the extra-biblical term *homousios*, meaning by it that the Son of God is of the same (*homo*) substance (*ousia*) as God the Father. The Creed of Nicaea called the Son "true God of true God." That is, he has the divine substance ("true God") and he has it because of the relation in which he stands to the Father ("of true God"). Because the fathers at Nicaea defined the Son's deity with reference to the Father, the doctrine of Nicaea is not just a matter of Christology, but a matter of the doctrine of God: Trinitarian theology.

The goal of the Nicene theologians (both the bishops present and, equally importantly, the rising generation which included the great Athanasius of Alexandria) was to assert the complete deity of Jesus Christ in a clear and

unequivocal way. They were convinced that Jesus must be God, since Jesus saves, and God alone can save. The Christology of Nicaea was driven by the logic of salvation.

FIRST COUNCIL OF CONSTANTINOPLE, AD 381

Near the end of the fourth century, the second ecumenical council met to re-affirm the theology of Nicaea after decades of controversy. The second council also extended Nicene theology by saying more about the Holy Spirit, since there had arisen by this time heretics who explicitly denied the Spirit's deity (*pneumatomachians*, or "fighters against the Spirit," as their opponents called them). Where the Creed of 325 had tersely said "we believe in the Holy Spirit," the Creed of 381 went on to call the Spirit "the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets." When the church of later centuries recites the Nicene Creed, it is this later, longer, more precise statement from 381 that we recite. "Nicene Creed" means not the creed from Nicaea 325, but the creed from Constantinople 381.

This council also took a step forward in its Christology. It taught the true humanity of Christ with more specificity: that the Son of God took on not just a physical human body but a non-physical human soul. They were opposing an error called Apollinarianism, which thought of Jesus Christ as a human body operated by the Logos. This view was rejected because it seemed more like puppetry than incarnation, and because it failed to grasp something crucial about salvation: In the words of Gregory of Nazianzus, "what is not assumed" into union with the Son in the incarnation "is not healed" by the work of Christ. If Christ was just a body, with God filling the place where other humans have souls, then the incarnation is not the basis of salvation for our full humanity. Again we see the councils arguing from the logic of salvation: Since the whole point of the incarnation was for God to save humanity by taking it on, Apollinarianism with its idea of a soulless body of Jesus falls short and frustrates that logic.

COUNCIL OF EPHEBUS, AD 431

If the first two ecumenical councils established in the fourth century the deity (Nicaea) and humanity (Constantinople I) of Christ, the next two councils provide guidance in the fifth century for how the two natures are related in the incarnation. It is possible to keep the two natures too far apart, as was proposed by the heresy condemned as Nestorianism at the third council. Nestorianism thought it could be so precise about the distance between the two natures of Christ that it was possible to say things like "Mary gave birth to the human nature of Christ only." It was the genius of Cyril of Alexandria to see what a disaster this separation would be: It (apparently accidentally) divided Christ into two persons, a human person (born of Mary) and a divine person (not).

Cyril's one central insight cut through this confusion: the personal center of the incarnation, a person possessing two natures, is the eternal Logos. He is the one who comes to be born of Mary and to die on the cross, and because he never ceases to be *homoousios* with the Father (he is God, having the divine nature) or *homoousios* with his mother (he is human, having the human nature), anything that can be said of either of his natures can be said about him, the one person who is the Word made flesh. To say that Mary gave birth only to the human nature is to disintegrate the incarnate Son's personal unity. Following Ephesus, we should always be careful not to speak of Jesus's divine nature as somebody, or as taking actions on its own as if it were a person; that would be to treat the natures as persons. Likewise we should not think of Christ's divine nature as one version of him and his human nature as somebody else, doing other things. The two natures belong to a single person.

COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON, AD 451

If the divine and human natures are joined in the one person of Christ, it becomes crucial to say precisely how the natures are joined, or at least to rule out wrong answers to that question. An error called Eutychianism conceived of the two natures as merging or mingling together in the incarnation, so that divinity and humanity flowed into Christ to form an unprecedented, new, mixed nature: a divine-and-human nature. In visual terms, you could say that if divinity is yellow and humanity is blue, Eutychianism makes Christ green. Many theological problems arise from this error, but the most disastrous is

that the humanity of Christ is eclipsed. Recall that the two natures involved in the incarnation are not the same size: divinity is infinite, but humanity is not. So if the two natures were to flow into one common nature, the result would not be a compound Christ, but a disappearance of the human into the divine. Again the logic of salvation would be undercut, as God would not so much save humanity as eliminate it by overwhelming it.

The council of Chalcedon (held in what is now a province of Istanbul) was not convened only to refute Eutychianism, but also to draw together the abiding insights of Cyril (one person), the clarity of Pope Leo I, and to summarize the conciliar Christology so far. With Chalcedon, Christology achieves a remarkable balance. If Nestorianism exaggerated what is double in Christ, Eutychianism exaggerated what is single in Christ. The incarnate Son is one person in two natures; not two persons (Nestorianism) or one nature (Eutychianism). In the incarnation, rightly understood, divinity and humanity are both truly present, neither diverging nor merging. In these four councils, the early church faced the hardest questions and rejected the major mistakes that can be made in answering them. The central section of the Chalcedonian Definition of 451 sums up the results: "He was begotten before the ages from the Father as regards his divinity, and in the last days the same for us and for our salvation from Mary, the virgin God-bearer, as regards his humanity; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only-begotten, acknowledged in two natures which undergo no confusion, no change, no division, no separation." Those four mighty negatives are boundary markers for orthodoxy, showing the right way to interpret the Bible in light of the logic of salvation.

LATER COUNCILS

There were several councils after Chalcedon worth paying attention to, but the most important was a second Council of Constantinople held in 553 under Emperor Justinian. Its importance lies in the fact that it connected Trinitarian and Christological terminology. There are three persons in the Trinity, and one of those three persons is the Son, the subject of the incarnation. The second person of the Trinity, in other words, is the one person of the incarnation. One of the Trinity died on the cross.

The Christology of Chalcedon describes the incarnation as a hypostatic union, where "hy-

postatic" means "in a person." The incarnation is not a union of natures (that would be Eutychianism) nor an interpersonal union (that would be Nestorianism), but a personal union: two natures maintaining their own natural reality and integrity, but now united in one person or *hypostasis*. After Chalcedon, it was possible to integrate this truth with the truth of the Trinity, in which we confess one divine nature in three *hypostases* or persons. The result is a beautiful integration of the biblical storyline with the more analytic categories of doctrinal clarity. The person of the Son came down and became incarnate, adding a true human nature to his eternal divine nature. There was nothing novel in this. The fifth council simply brought together Christological and Trinitarian uses of the word "person" in order to make it clear that the person on the cross is the Son of God.

It may be helpful to simplify the Christology of the councils as a way of keeping good order between the unity and the duality of Christ. Chalcedonian categories are especially helpful in maintaining the integrity of the two natures, maintaining a duality in Christ. Anything that belongs to a nature is something that we should expect to be dually present in the incarnation: two natures, two sets of natural inclinations, and even two natural wills, as a later council (Constantinople III in 681) would affirm. But anything belonging to a person is something that we should expect to be singly present in the incarnation. An important consequence of this is that when we say "Jesus is a human person," we do not mean that his personhood is something creaturely like the personhood of every other human. Instead, we mean that he is a divine

person (the Son of God, the second person of the Trinity) who has taken on a created human nature. At the center of the incarnation is the *hypostasis* of the hypostatic union. The person involved in the incarnation is not a compound person derived by adding something from above and something from below; the person of the Son comes down from above and takes to himself what is below. The parallelism and duality appropriate to two-natures Christology only functions properly within a zone marked out by the doctrine of the Trinity.

Thus the clear categories of Chalcedon, with their tough logic articulating how the divine and human natures of Christ do and do not relate in his one person, are given life and sense by the doctrine of the Trinity, the story arc of Christ's mission to save humanity, and the logic of salvation. We may have any number of further questions about the incarnation, and we should be alert to which ones will not be answerable. Questions about the interior psychological experience of the incarnate Son of God, for instance, are probably not questions we can answer. But the point of the Christological work of the councils was not to dissolve the mystery of the incarnation; it was to locate that mystery and to exclude false understandings of it. In some of the councils, the books of the Gospels were set up on prominent display to show that Scripture itself was the source and the goal of all the deliberations. For those of us who inherit the conciliar Christology today, it continues to be true that the doctrines should serve the Bible, and not vice versa. The decisions of the councils should serve to help us understand the story of Jesus in Scripture.

PARTICIPATION IN THE TRINITY

E. Ray Clendenen

According to Donald Fairbairn, the church fathers did not describe justification as an end in itself. Rather they spoke of it as a prerequisite to something else. They identified that “something else” with the Greek word *theosis*, translated in Latin as *deificatio*, and in English as “deification.” As Athanasius wrote in *On the Incarnation* (par. 54), “For he assumed humanity that we might become divine.” The fathers did not believe, however, that finite beings can become divine in the sense that God is divine. Rather, they echoed the gospel promise of participation in the divine nature spoken of by the apostle Peter:

By these he has given us very great and precious promises, so that through them *you may share in the divine nature*, escaping the corruption that is in the world because of evil desires (2Pt 1:4; emphasis added).

In other words, God has granted that we may share in his immortal life. Fairbairn explains, “Christians become adopted sons and daughters of God, thus sharing by grace in the fellowship the Son has with the Father by nature” (Fairbairn, *Life in the Trinity*, xiv, 6-9).

Irenaeus of Lyons described the pathway to this fellowship as becoming one with Christ:

The Word of God was made man, and He who was the Son of God became the Son of man,

that man, having been taken into the Word, and receiving the adoption, might become the son of God. For by no other means could we have attained to incorruptibility and immortality, unless we had been united to incorruptibility and immortality. (*Against Heresies*, 3.19.1)

Similarly, according to Fairbairn, Cyril of Alexandria made “adoption into the Son’s relationship to the Father the key aspect of *theosis*” (*Life in the Trinity*, 35):

Shall we, then, leaving off being what we are, mount up to the divine and unutterable essence, and deposing the Word of God from his very sonship, in place of him sit with the Father and make the kindness of him who honors us a pretext for impiety? God forbid! Rather, the Son will be unchangeably in that which He is, and we, adopted into sonship and gods by grace, will not be ignorant of what we are. (*Commentary on John*, 1.9)

This “strand of patristic thought,” says Fairbairn, which “understood *theosis* in terms of the Father’s relationship to the Son, . . . saw our participation in this relationship as the scarlet thread of the Christian faith” (*Life in the Trinity*, 115).



OLD TESTAMENT

GENESIS

CIRCUMSTANCES OF WRITING

Since pre-Christian times authorship of the Torah, the first five books of the Bible, has been attributed to Moses, an enormously influential Israelite leader from the second millennium BC with an aristocratic Egyptian background. Even though Genesis is technically anonymous, both the Old and New Testaments unanimously recognize Moses as the Torah's author (Jos 8:35; 2Ch 23:18; Neh 8:1; Mk 12:19,26; Lk 2:22; Rm 10:5; Heb 10:28). At the same time, evidence in Genesis suggests that minor editorial changes dating to ancient times have been inserted into the text. Examples include the mention of "Dan" (14:14), a city that was not named until the days of the judges (Jdg 18:29), and the use of a phrase that assumed the existence of Israelite kings (Gn 36:31).

The Torah (a Hebrew term for *law*) was seen as one unit until at least the second century BC. Sometime prior to the birth of Christ, the Torah was divided into five separate books, later referred to as the Pentateuch (lit "five vessels"). Genesis, the first book of the Torah, provides both the universal history of humankind and the patriarchal history of the nation of Israel. The first section (chaps. 1–11) is a general history commonly called the "primeval history," showing how all humanity descended from one couple and became sinners. The second section (chaps. 12–50) is a more specific history commonly referred to as the "patriarchal history," focusing on the covenant God made with Abraham and his descendants: Isaac, Jacob, and Jacob's twelve sons. Genesis unfolds God's plan to bless and redeem humanity through Abraham's descendants. The book concludes with the events that led to the Israelites being in the land of Egypt.

CONTRIBUTION TO THE BIBLE

Genesis lays the groundwork for everything else we read and experience in Scripture. Through Genesis we understand where we came from, how we got in the fallen state we are in, and the beginnings of God's gracious work on our behalf. Genesis unfolds God's original purpose for humanity.

Genesis provides the foundation from which we understand God's covenant with Israel that was established

with the giving of the Law. For the Israelite community, the stories of the origins of humanity, sin, and the covenant relationship with God helped them understand why God gave them the Law.

STRUCTURE

Genesis is chiefly a narrative. From a narrative standpoint, God is the only true hero of the Bible, and the book of Genesis has the distinct privilege of introducing him. God is the first subject of a verb in the book and is mentioned more frequently than any other character in the Bible. The content of the first eleven chapters is distinct from the patriarchal stories in chapters 12–50. The primary literary device is the catchphrase "these are the family records." The phrase is broader in meaning than simply "generation," and refers more to a narrative account. This was a common practice in ancient Near East writings. This phrase also serves as a link between the key person in the previous narrative and the one anticipated in the next section. Genesis could be described as historical genealogy, which ties together creation and human history in one continuum.

CHRYSOSTOM ON GENESIS

Notice this remarkable author, dearly beloved, and the particular gift he had. I mean, while all the other inspired authors told either what would happen after a long time or what was going to take place immediately, this blessed author, being born many generations after the event, was guided by the deity on high and judged worthy to narrate what had been created by the Lord of all from the very beginning. Accordingly he began with these words: "In the beginning God created heaven and earth." He well-nigh bellows at us all and says, "Is it by human beings I am taught in uttering these things? It is the one who brought being from nothing who stirred my tongue in narrating them." Since we therefore listen to these words not as the words of Moses but as the words of the God of all things coming to us through the tongue of Moses, so I beg you, let us heed what is said as distinguished from our own reasoning.

THE CREATION

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.^A

²Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness covered the surface of the watery depths, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters. ³Then God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. ⁴God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." There was an evening, and there was a morning: one day.

⁶Then God said, "Let there be an expanse between the waters, separating water from water."

⁷So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above the expanse. And it was so. ⁸God called the ex-

ppanse "sky."^B Evening came and then morning: the second day.

⁹Then God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear." And it was so. ¹⁰God called the dry land "earth," and the gathering of the water he called "seas." And God saw that it was good.

¹¹Then God said, "Let the earth produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and fruit trees on the earth bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds." And it was so. ¹²The earth produced vegetation: seed-bearing plants according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. ¹³Evening came and then morning: the third day.

¹⁴Then God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night. They will serve as signs for seasons^C

^A 1:1 Or *created the universe* ^B 1:8 Or "heavens." ^C 1:14 Or *for the appointed times*

1:1 BASIL THE GREAT: The birth of the world was preceded by a condition of things suitable for the exercise of supernatural powers, outstripping the limits of time, eternal and infinite. The Creator and Demiurge of the universe perfected his works in it, spiritual light for the happiness of all who love the Lord, intellectual and invisible natures, all the orderly arrangement of pure intelligences who are beyond the reach of our mind and of whom we cannot even discover the names. They fill the essence of this invisible world, as Paul teaches us. "For by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions or principalities or powers" [Col 1:16] or virtues or hosts of angels or the dignities of archangels. To this world at last it was necessary to add a new world, both a school and training place where the souls of men should be taught and a home for beings destined to be born and to die. **HEXAEMERON 1.5.**

1:2 EPHREM THE SYRIAN: It was appropriate to reveal here that the Spirit hovered in order for us to learn that the work of creation was held in common by the Spirit with the Father and the Son. The Father spoke. The Son created [see Jn 1:1-3]. And so it was also right that the Spirit offer its work, clearly shown through its hovering, in order to demonstrate its unity with the other persons. Thus we learn that all was brought to perfection and accomplished by the Trinity. **COMMENTARY ON GENESIS 1.**

1:3 AUGUSTINE: We ought to understand that God did not say "Let there be light" by a sound brought forth from the lungs or by the tongue and teeth. Such thoughts are those of persons physically preoccupied. To be wise in accord with the flesh is death. "Let there be light" was spoken ineffably. **ON THE LITERAL INTERPRETATION OF GENESIS 5.19.**

1:4 AUGUSTINE: These words do not mean that God found before him a good that he had not known but that he was pleased by one that was finished. **TWO BOOKS ON GENESIS AGAINST THE MANICHEANS 1.8.13.**

1:6 CYRIL OF JERUSALEM: [W]hat fault have they to find with the vast creation of God, who out of the fluid nature of the waters formed the stable substance of the heavens? For God said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters." God spoke once for all, and it stands fast, never failing. **CATECHETICAL LECTURES 9.5.**

1:7 AUGUSTINE: The matter was separated by the interposition of the firmament so that the lower matter is that of bodies and the higher matter that of souls. **ON THE LITERAL INTERPRETATION OF GENESIS 8.29.**

1:8 ORIGEN: Although God had already previously made heaven, now he makes the firmament. For he made heaven first, about which he says, "Heaven is my throne" [Is 66:1]. But after that he makes the firmament, that is, the corporeal heaven. For every corporeal object is, without doubt, firm and solid; and it is this that "divides the water which is above heaven from the water which is

below heaven" [see vv. 6-7]. **HOMILIES ON GENESIS 1.2.**

1:9-10 GREGORY OF NYSSA: "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen are not made of things which do appear" [Heb 11:3]. Let us, following the example of the apostle, leave the question of the "how" in each created thing without meddling with it at all but merely observing incidentally that the movement of God's will becomes at any moment that he pleases a fact, and the intention becomes at once realized in nature. **ON THE SOUL AND THE RESURRECTION.**

1:11 BASIL THE GREAT: When the earth heard, "Let it bring forth vegetation and the fruit trees," it did not produce plants that it had hidden in it; nor did it send up to the surface the palm or the oak or the cypress that had been hidden somewhere down below in its womb. On the contrary, it is the divine Word that is the origin of things made. **HEXAEMERON 8.1.**

1:12 BASIL THE GREAT: There is nothing truer than this, that either each plant has seed or there exists in it some generative power. And this accounts for the expression "of its own kind." For the shoot of the reed is not productive of an olive tree, but from the reed comes another reed, and from seeds spring plants related to the seeds sown. Thus what was put forth by the earth in its first generation has been preserved until the present time, since the kinds persisted through constant reproduction. **HEXAEMERON 5.2.**

CREATION OUT OF NOTHING

Some theologians today reject that God created the universe out of nothing because they do not see any one verse in Scripture that explicitly teaches this doctrine. Augustine, however, shows in the following excerpt (*Confessions* 11.5) that it is a logical inference from Genesis 1:1. He prays his thoughts and asks God how he could create the heavens and the earth, and he concludes that God made everything not by fashioning preexistent matter into the heavens and the earth but by speaking them into existence out of nothing.



How did you make the heaven and the earth, and what was the tool of such a mighty work as yours? For it was not like a human worker fashioning body from body, according to the fancy of his mind, able somehow or other to impose on it a form which the mind perceived in itself by its inner eye (yet how should even he be able to do this, if you had not made that mind?). He imposes the form on something already existing and having some sort of being, such as clay, or stone or wood or gold or such like (and where would these things come from if you had not furnished them?). For you made his body for the artisan, and you made the mind which directs the limbs. You made the matter from which he makes anything. You created the capacity by which he understands his art and sees within his mind what he may do with the things before him. You gave him his bodily sense by which, as if he had an interpreter, he may communicate from mind to matter what he proposes to do and report back to his mind what has been done, that the mind may consult with the Truth which presides over it as to whether what is done is well done.

¶ All these things praise you, the Creator of them all. But how did you make them? How, O God, did you make the heaven and earth? For truly, neither in heaven nor on earth did you make heaven and earth—nor in the air nor in the waters, since all of these also belong to the heaven and the earth. Nowhere in the whole world did you make the whole world, because there was no place where it could be made before it was made. And you did not hold anything in your hand from which to fashion the heaven and the earth, for where could you have gotten what you had not made in order to make something with it? Is there, indeed, anything at all except because you are? Thus you spoke, and they were made, and by thy Word you made them all.

and for days and years. ¹⁵ They will be lights in the expanse of the sky to provide light on the earth." And it was so. ¹⁶ God made the two great lights — the greater light to rule over the day and the lesser light to rule over the night — as well as the stars. ¹⁷ God placed them in the expanse of the sky to provide light on the earth, ¹⁸ to rule the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹ Evening came and then morning: the fourth day.

²⁰ Then God said, "Let the water swarm with ^A living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky." ²¹ So God created the large sea-creatures ^B and every living creature that moves and swarms in the water, according to their kinds. He also created every winged creature according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. ²² God blessed them: "Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the waters of the seas, and let the birds multiply on the earth." ²³ Evening came and then morning: the fifth day.

²⁴ Then God said, "Let the earth produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock,

creatures that crawl, and the wildlife of the earth according to their kinds." And it was so. ²⁵ So God made the wildlife of the earth according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that crawl on the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.

²⁶ Then God said, "Let us make man ^C in ^D our image, according to our likeness. They will rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the livestock, the whole earth, ^E and the creatures that crawl ^F on the earth."

²⁷ So God created man in his own image; he created him in ^G the image of God; he created them male and female.

²⁸ God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it. Rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and every creature that crawls ^H on the earth."

²⁹ God also said, "Look, I have given you every seed-bearing plant on the surface of the entire earth and every tree whose fruit contains seed. This will be food for you, ³⁰ for all the wildlife of the earth, for every bird of the sky, and for

^A1:20 Lit with swarms of ^B1:21 Or created sea monsters ^C1:26 Or human beings; Hb 'adam, also in v. 27

^D1:26 Or as ^E1:26 Syr reads sky, and over every animal of the land ^F1:26 Or scurry

^G1:27 Or man as his own image; he created him as ^H1:28 Or and all scurrying animals

GREGORY OF NYSSA: We learn from Scripture in the account of the first creation that first the earth brought forth "the green herb" (as the narrative says), and then from this plant seed was yielded, from which, when it was shed on the ground, the same form of the original plant again sprang up. The apostle, it is to be observed, declares that this very same thing happens in the resurrection also [see 1Co 15:35-36]. And so we learn from him the fact not only that our humanity will be then changed into something nobler but also that what we have therein to expect is nothing else than that which was at the beginning. **ON THE SOUL AND THE RESURRECTION.**

1:14-15 CYRIL OF JERUSALEM: Men ought to have been astonished and amazed not only at the arrangement of the sun and moon but also at the well-ordered movements of the stars and their unfettered courses and the timely rising of each of them; how some are signs of summer, others of winter; how some indicate the time for sowing, others the times of navigation. **CATECHETICAL LECTURES 9.8.**

1:24-25 CHRYSOSTOM: It wasn't simply for our use that he produced all these things; it was also for our benefit in the

sense that we might see the overflowing abundance of his creatures and be overwhelmed at the Creator's power, and be in a position to know that all these things were produced by a certain wisdom and ineffable love out of regard for the human being that was destined to come into being. **HOMILIES ON GENESIS 7.13.**

1:26 IRENAEUS: In previous times man, it is true, was said to have been made according to the image of God, but he was not revealed as such. For the Word according to whose image man was made was still invisible. Therefore also man easily lost the likeness. But when the Word of God was made flesh, he confirmed both image and likeness. For on the one hand [Jesus] truly showed the image by becoming what his image was. On the other hand he firmly established the likeness by the co-assimilation of man to the invisible Father through the visible Word. **AGAINST HERESIES 5.15.1.**

1:28 GREGORY OF NYSSA: Let no one think that we depreciate marriage as an institution. We are well aware that it is not a stranger to God's blessing. . . . But our view of marriage is this: that while the pursuit of heavenly things should be a man's first care, yet if he can use the

advantages of marriage with sobriety and moderation, he need not despise this way of serving. **ON VIRGINITY 8.**

MAXIMUS THE CONFESSOR: [B]eing in himself the universal union of all, [Christ] has started with our [sexual] division and become the perfect human being, having from us, on our account and in accordance with our nature, everything that we are and lacking nothing, "apart from sin" [Heb 4:15], and having no need of the natural intercourse of marriage. **BOOK OF DIFFICULTIES 41.**

1:29-30 GREGORY OF NYSSA: Nature had not yet been divided; everything was completely fresh. Hunters did not capture prey, since people did not yet practice this. The beasts did not yet tear apart prey, since they were not meat eaters yet. . . . So was the first creation, and to this creation will be restored after this [age]. Humans will return to their original creation, rejecting hostility, a life encumbered with care, the slavery of the world to daily worries. Once they have renounced all this, they will return to that utopian life which is not enslaved to the passions of the flesh, which is freedom, the closeness to God, a partaker of the life of the angels. **ON THE ORIGIN OF MAN.**

every creature that crawls on the earth — everything having the breath of life in it — I have given^a every green plant for food.” And it was so. ³¹ God saw all that he had made, and it was very good indeed. Evening came and then morning: the sixth day.

2 So the heavens and the earth and everything in them were completed. ² On the seventh^b day God had completed his work that he had done, and he rested^c on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. ³ God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, for on it he rested from all his work of creation.^d

MAN AND WOMAN IN THE GARDEN

⁴ These are the records of the heavens and the earth, concerning their creation. At the time^e that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, ⁵ no shrub of the field had yet grown on the land,^f and no plant of the field had yet sprouted, for the LORD God had not made it rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground. ⁶ But mist would come up from the earth and water all the ground. ⁷ Then the LORD God formed the man out of the dust from the ground and breathed the breath of life into his nostrils, and the man became a living being.

⁸ The LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he placed the man he had formed. ⁹ The LORD God caused to grow out of

the ground every tree pleasing in appearance and good for food, including the tree of life in the middle of the garden, as well as the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

¹⁰ A river went^g out from Eden to water the garden. From there it divided and became the source of four rivers.^h ¹¹ The name of the first is Pishon, which flows through the entire land of Havilah,ⁱ where there is gold. ¹² Gold from that land is pure;^j bdellium^k and onyx^l are also there. ¹³ The name of the second river is Gihon, which flows through the entire land of Cush. ¹⁴ The name of the third river is Tigris, which runs east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

¹⁵ The LORD God took the man and placed him in the garden of Eden to work it and watch over it. ¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree of the garden,¹⁷ but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for on the day you eat from it, you will certainly die.” ¹⁸ Then the LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper corresponding to him.” ¹⁹ The LORD God formed out of the ground every wild animal and every bird of the sky, and brought each to the man to see what he would call it. And whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name. ²⁰ The man gave names to all the livestock, to the birds of the

^a 1:30 I have given added for clarity ^b 2:2 Sam, LXX, Syr read sixth ^c 2:2 Or ceased, also in v. 3 ^d 2:3 Lit work that God created to make
^e 2:4 Lit creation on the day ^f 2:5 Or earth ^g 2:10 Or goes ^h 2:10 Lit became four heads ⁱ 2:11 Or of the Havilah
^j 2:12 Lit good ^k 2:12 A yellowish, transparent gum resin ^l 2:12 Identity of this precious stone uncertain

1:31 GREGORY OF NAZIANZUS: He made a first day, a second, a third, and so forth until the seventh day which was a rest from work. According to these days, everything created was subdivided, brought into an order by inexpressible laws. So creation was not an instantaneous act by the all-powerful Word; for him to think or to speak is to accomplish a task. If humans were last to enter the world—and in such a way as to honor God’s handiwork with God’s image—is this not marvelous? It is like saying that as a king he prepared the palace and then, as king, when everything was already prepared, led in the procession. **HOMILIES ON GENESIS 44.**

2:3 EPHREM THE SYRIAN: Just as the trees, the vegetation, the animals, the birds and even humankind were old, so also were they young. They were old according to the appearance of their limbs and their substances, yet they were young because of the hour and

moment of their creation. Likewise, the moon was both old and young. It was young, for it was but a moment old, but was also old, for it was full as it is on the fifteenth day. **COMMENTARY ON GENESIS 1.24.1.**

2:4-6 CHRYSOSTOM: The earth in compliance with the Lord’s word and direction produced plants and was stirred into pangs of fertility without depending on the sun for assistance (how could it, after all, the sun not yet being created?), nor on the moisture from showers, nor on human labor (human beings, after all, not having been brought forth). **HOMILIES ON GENESIS 12.5.**

2:7 GREGORY OF NAZIANZUS: The soul is the breath of God, a substance of heaven mixed with the lowest earth, a light entombed in a cave, yet wholly divine and unquenchable. . . . [God] spoke, and taking some of the newly minted earth his immortal hands made an image into which he imparted some

of his own life. He sent his spirit, a beam from the invisible divinity. **DOGMATIC HYMNS 7.**

2:8 BASIL THE GREAT: For this reason we all look to the east in our prayers, but few know that this is because we are seeking the ancient fatherland, which God planted in Eden, toward the east. **ON THE HOLY SPIRIT 27.66.**

2:16-17 ATHANASIUS: [H]e brought them into his own garden and gave them a law so that, if they kept the grace and remained good, they might still keep the life in paradise without sorrow or pain or care, besides having the promise of incorruption in heaven. But if they transgressed and turned back and became evil, they might know that they were incurring that corruption in death that was theirs by nature, no longer to live in paradise but cast out of it from that time forth to die and abide in death and corruption. **ON THE INCARNATION 3.4.**

sky, and to every wild animal; but for the man^a no helper was found corresponding to him.²¹ So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to come over the man, and he slept. God took one of his ribs and closed the flesh at that place.²² Then the LORD God made the rib he had taken from the man into a woman and brought her to the man.²³ And the man said:

This one, at last, is bone of my bone
and flesh of my flesh;
this one will be called "woman,"
for she was taken from man.

²⁴ This is why a man leaves his father and mother and bonds with his wife, and they become one flesh.²⁵ Both the man and his wife were naked, yet felt no shame.

THE TEMPTATION AND THE FALL

3 Now the serpent was the most cunning of all the wild animals that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You can't eat from any tree in the garden'?"

² The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit from the trees in the garden.³ But about the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden, God said, 'You must not eat it or touch it, or you will die.'"

⁴ "No! You will not die," the serpent said to the woman.⁵ "In fact, God knows that when^b you eat it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God,^c knowing good and evil."⁶ The woman saw

that the tree was good for food and delightful to look at, and that it was desirable for obtaining wisdom. So she took some of its fruit and ate it; she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.⁷ Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

SIN'S CONSEQUENCES

⁸ Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze,^d and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden.⁹ So the LORD God called out to the man and said to him, "Where are you?"

¹⁰ And he said, "I heard you^e in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid."

¹¹ Then he asked, "Who told you that you were naked? Did you eat from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"

¹² The man replied, "The woman you gave to be with me — she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate."

¹³ So the LORD God asked the woman, "What is this you have done?"

And the woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

¹⁴ So the LORD God said to the serpent:
Because you have done this,
you are cursed more than
any livestock
and more than any wild animal.

^a2:20 Or for Adam ^b3:5 Lit on the day ^c3:5 Or gods, or divine beings ^d3:8 Lit at the wind of the day ^e3:10 Lit the sound of you

2:21-23 CYRIL OF JERUSALEM: Of whom in the beginning was Eve begotten? What mother conceived her, the motherless? But the Scripture says that she was born out of Adam's side. Is Eve then born out of man's side without a mother, and is a child not to be born without a father, of a virgin's womb? This debt of gratitude was due to men from womankind: for Eve was begotten of Adam and not conceived of a mother, but as it were brought forth of man alone. **CATECHETICAL LECTURES** 12.29.
2:23-24 AMBROSE: If the union of Adam and Eve is a great mystery in Christ and in the church, it is certain that as Eve was bone of the bones of her husband and flesh of his flesh, we also are members of Christ's body, bones of his bones and flesh of his flesh. **LETTERS TO LAYMEN** 85.
2:25 CHRYSOSTOM: [W]hile sin and disobedience had not yet come on the

scene, they were clad in that glory from above which caused them no shame. But after the breaking of the law, then entered the scene both shame and awareness of their nakedness. **HOMILIES ON GENESIS** 15.14.
3:4-5 CHRYSOSTOM: Do you see how the devil led her captive, handicapped her reasoning and caused her to set her thoughts on goals beyond her real capabilities, in order that she might be puffed up with empty hopes and lose her hold on the advantages already accorded her? **HOMILIES ON GENESIS** 16.11.
3:8-13 CHRYSOSTOM: See the Lord's loving kindness and the surpassing degree of his long-suffering. I mean, though being in a position to begrudge such great sinners the right of reply and rather than to consign them at once to the punishment he had determined in anticipation of their transgression, he

shows patience and withholds action. He asks a question, receives a reply and questions them further as if inviting them to excuse themselves so that he might seize the opportunity to display his characteristic love in regard to the sinners, even despite their fall. **HOMILIES ON GENESIS** 17.13.
3:9-10 AUGUSTINE: Insofar as a rebellion of the flesh against the rebellious soul prompted our parents to cover their shame, they experienced one kind of death—God's desertion of the soul. It was this death that was intimated when God asked Adam, who was beside himself with fear and in hiding, "Where are you?" This was not asked, of course, because God did not know the answer. Rather, it was asked in order to scold Adam by reminding him that there really was nowhere that he could be, once God was not in him. **CITY OF GOD** 13.15.

of

IRENÆUS OF LYONS

¶ **IRENÆUS SERVED AS BISHOP IN LYONS** (modern-day France) over a Christian community suffering from persecutions and theological disputes with various heretical groups. He was born in Smyrna between ca AD 120 and 140 and became a disciple of Polycarp before migrating west to Lyons. Irenaeus died around AD 202 and two of his works survive: an immense five-volume refutation of Gnosticism commonly known as *Against Heresies* and a short catechetical manual entitled the *Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching*.

GNOSTICISM

¶ The main heresy that concerned Irenaeus was Gnosticism, which boasted a complex set of beliefs that aimed to supplant the Christian worldview with a competing creation myth. In general, ancient Gnostics (derived from *gnosis* the Greek term for “knowledge”) believed in a supreme God above a collection of other divine figures residing in a region called the Pleroma. Through the rebellion of a lower divine being, the creator of the world (also known as the Demiurge) was brought forth. The Gnostics argue that the Demiurge was ignorant of the superior gods above him and through evil desires created the material world. At the same time, unbeknownst to the Demiurge, a divine element or “divine spark,” was implanted in human beings. An enduring conflict between spirit and matter ensued until a redeemer figure appeared to impart the “knowledge” of this myth and the salvation found in the ultimate separation of the divine spark from the body and material creation at death to return to the Pleroma.

ORTHODOXY AND HERESY

¶ In *Against Heresies*, Irenaeus responded to the prevailing streams of Gnosticism by arguing that the orthodox faith of the church precedes any heretical deviation. The apostles handed down the faith of the church; the heretics rejected the faith received by choosing to believe a different myth. In order to help guide Christians’ understanding of the faith, Irenaeus held up two things: the Scriptures and the rule of faith. The Scriptures, Irenaeus argued, were given by the Spirit and possess a unity, coherence, and harmony that testifies to the work of salvation that the Father accomplished through the Son. Though there are a diversity of Scripture passages, “through the many voices of the passages there will be heard among us one harmonious melody that hymns praises to God who made all things.” To perceive the theological unity of the Scriptures, Irenaeus also posited the need for a rule of faith, which offered some essential theological guardrails for interpreting Scripture. Irenaeus writes that the “Church, though dispersed throughout the whole world, even to the ends of the earth, has received from the apostles and their disciples this faith.” He goes on to recount the points of this rule of faith (which are themselves derived from Scripture) in summary form including the conviction that God, the Father is Creator of all things, Jesus Christ the Son became incarnate for our salvation, and the Holy Spirit proclaimed the work of Christ in the Scriptures. Irenaeus argues that this rule of faith is Scripture’s thesis, or what he calls its “hypothesis,” that stands in sharp contrast to the peculiar theology of the Gnostic myth. Ultimately, Irenaeus is remembered as a champion of Christian orthodoxy at a time when others were exploiting and distorting the Scriptures to defend their own theological system.

Stephen O. Presley

You will move on your belly
and eat dust all the days of your life.

¹⁵ I will put hostility between you
and the woman,
and between your offspring
and her offspring.
He will strike your head,
and you will strike his heel.

¹⁶ He said to the woman:
I will intensify your labor pains;
you will bear children with painful
effort.
Your desire will be for your husband,
yet he will rule over you.

¹⁷ And he said to the man, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'Do not eat from it':

The ground is cursed because of you.
You will eat from it by means of
painful labor^A
all the days of your life.

¹⁸ It will produce thorns and thistles
for you,
and you will eat the plants
of the field.

¹⁹ You will eat bread^B by the sweat
of your brow
until you return to the ground,
since you were taken from it.

For you are dust,
and you will return to dust."

²⁰ The man named his wife Eve^C because she was the mother of all the living. ²¹ The LORD God made clothing from skins for the man and his wife, and he clothed them.

²² The LORD God said, "Since the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil, he must not reach out, take from the tree of life, eat, and live forever." ²³ So the LORD God sent him away from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. ²⁴ He drove the man out and stationed the cherubim and the flaming, whirling sword east of the garden of Eden to guard the way to the tree of life.

CAIN MURDERS ABEL

4 The man was intimate with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain. She said, "I have had a male child with the LORD's help."^D ² She also gave birth to his brother Abel. Now Abel became a shepherd of flocks, but Cain worked the ground. ³ In the course of time Cain presented some of the land's produce as an offering to the LORD. ⁴ And Abel also presented an offering — some of the firstborn of his flock and their fat portions. The LORD had regard for Abel and his offering, ⁵ but he did not have regard for Cain and his offering. Cain was furious, and he looked despondent.^E

^A3:17 Lit it through pain ^B3:19 Or food ^C3:20 Lit Living, or Life ^D4:1 Lit the LORD ^E4:5 Lit and his face fell

3:15 IRENAEUS: The enemy would not have been justly conquered unless it had been a man made of woman who conquered him. For it was by a woman that he had power over man from the beginning, setting himself up in opposition to man. Because of this the Lord also declares himself to be the Son of Man, so renewing in himself that primal man from whom the formation of man by woman began, that as our race went down to death by a man who was conquered we might ascend again to life by a man who overcame; and as death won the palm of victory over us by a man, so we might by a man receive the palm of victory over death. [See 1Co 15:20-22.] **AGAINST HERESIES 5.21.1.**

3:16 AUGUSTINE: Why, then, should it seem beyond belief that [God] made the bodies of the first human beings in such a way that, if they had not sinned and had not immediately thereupon contracted a disease that would bring death, they would move the members by which

offspring are generated in the same way that one commands his feet when he walks, so that conception would take place without disordered passions and birth without pain? But as it is, by disobeying God's command they deserved to experience in their members, where death now reigned, the movement of a law at war with the law of the mind. **ON THE LITERAL INTERPRETATION OF GENESIS 9.10.18.**

3:22 CHRYSOSTOM: [D]o you put forward the testimony of the enemy and the conspirator? The devil said, "You will be gods" [v.5]. Did they really become gods? Therefore, since they did not become gods, they did not receive the knowledge of good and evil either. For the devil is a liar and never speaks the truth. In fact the Gospel says, "He never stays in the truth" [Jn 8:44]. **SERMONS ON GENESIS 7.**

3:22-24 THEODORET OF CYRUS: Because the devil was envious and the woman was gullible, humankind was immediately cast out of paradise. It was

made to walk the very earth from which Adam had just been created, inheriting sweat, toil and hard labor. Along with Adam, the earth and all living things that followed were subjected to evil . . . [see Rm 8:20-22]. For since Adam did not use good judgment during the age of paradise—an age which was free from sorrow and pain—he was joined to adversity. **ON THE INCARNATION OF THE LORD 6.1.**

4:3-5 EPHREM THE SYRIAN: Abel was very discerning in his choice of offerings, whereas Cain showed no such discernment. Abel selected and offered the choicest of his firstborn and of his fat ones, while Cain either offered young grains or certain fruits that are found at the same time as the young grains. Even if his offering had been smaller than that of his brother, it would have been as acceptable as the offering of his brother, had he not brought it with such carelessness. **COMMENTARY ON GENESIS 3.2.1.**

THE SON OF GOD AS THE SECOND ADAM

Christianity teaches both the dignity and sinfulness of humanity. While we bear God's image, we cannot do so to our fullest because of our sin. In the following selections from his *Against Heretics* (Book III, 18.1-2; 21.10), Irenaeus argues that the preexistent Son of God becomes truly human, like Adam in origin and humanity. The Son, thus, becomes the second Adam and provides salvation through his perfect obedience, death, and resurrection.

The Son of God did not . . . begin to exist, being with the Father from the beginning, but when he became incarnate and was made man, he commenced afresh the long line of human beings and furnished us, in a brief, comprehensive manner, with salvation, so that what we had lost in Adam—namely, to be according to the image and likeness of God—we might recover in Christ Jesus.

¶ For as it was not possible that the man who had once for all been conquered, and who had been destroyed through disobedience, could reform himself, and obtain the prize of victory; and as it was also impossible that he could attain to salvation who had fallen under the power of sin—the Son effected both these things, being the Word of God, descending from the Father, becoming incarnate, stooping low, even to death, and consummating the arranged plan of our salvation, . . .

¶ [A]s by one man's disobedience sin entered, and death obtained [a place] through sin, so also by the obedience of one man, righteousness having been introduced, shall cause life to fructify in those persons who in times past were dead. And as . . . Adam had his substance from untilled and as yet virgin soil (Gn 2:5) and was formed by the hand of God, that is, by the Word of God—for "all things were made by Him" and the Lord took dust from the earth and formed man, so did He who is the Word, recapitulating Adam in himself, rightly receive a birth, enabling him to gather up Adam [into himself] from Mary, who was as yet a virgin. If, then, the first Adam had a man for his father and was born of human seed, it [would be] reasonable to say that the second Adam was begotten of Joseph. But if the former was taken from the dust, and God was his Maker, it was incumbent that the latter also, making a recapitulation in himself, should be formed as man by God, to have an analogy with the former as respects his origin. Why, then, did not God again take dust, but wrought so that the formation should be made of Mary? It was that there might not be another formation called into being, nor any other which should [require to] be saved, but that the very same formation should be summed up [in Christ as had existed in Adam], the analogy having been preserved.

⁶ Then the LORD said to Cain, “Why are you furious? And why do you look despondent?^a ⁷ If you do what is right, won’t you be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must rule over it.”

⁸ Cain said to his brother Abel, “Let’s go out to the field.”^b And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.

⁹ Then the LORD said to Cain, “Where is your brother Abel?”

“I don’t know,” he replied. “Am I my brother’s guardian?”

¹⁰ Then he said, “What have you done? Your brother’s blood cries out to me from the ground! ¹¹ So now you are cursed, alienated from the ground that opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood you have shed.^c ¹² If you work the ground, it will never again give you its yield. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth.”

You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until it comes to rest in you.

—AUGUSTINE’S CONFESSIONS 1.1

¹³ But Cain answered the LORD, “My punishment^d is too great to bear! ¹⁴ Since you are banishing me today from the face of the earth, and I must hide from your presence and become a restless wanderer on the earth, whoever finds me will kill me.”

¹⁵ Then the LORD replied to him, “In that case,^e whoever kills Cain will suffer vengeance seven times over.”^f And he placed a mark on Cain

so that whoever found him would not kill him.

¹⁶ Then Cain went out from the LORD’s presence and lived in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

THE LINE OF CAIN

¹⁷ Cain was intimate with his wife, and she conceived and gave birth to Enoch. Then Cain became the builder of a city, and he named the city Enoch after his son. ¹⁸ Irad was born to Enoch, Irad fathered Mehujael, Mehujael fathered Methushael, and Methushael fathered Lamech. ¹⁹ Lamech took two wives for himself, one named Adah and the other named Zillah.

²⁰ Adah bore Jabal; he was the father of the nomadic herdsmen. ²¹ His brother was named Jubal; he was the father of all who play the lyre and the flute. ²² Zillah bore Tubal-cain, who made all kinds of bronze and iron tools. Tubal-cain’s sister was Naamah.

²³ Lamech said to his wives:
Adah and Zillah, hear my voice;
wives of Lamech, pay attention
to my words.

For I killed a man for wounding me,
a young man for striking me.

²⁴ If Cain is to be avenged seven times over,
then for Lamech it will be
seventy-seven times!

²⁵ Adam was intimate with his wife again, and she gave birth to a son and named him Seth, for she said, “God has given^g me another child^h in place of Abel, since Cain killed him.” ²⁶ A son was born to Seth also, and he named him Enosh. At that time people began to call on the name of the LORD.

^a 4:6 Lit why has your face fallen ^b 4:8 Sam, LXX, Syr, Vg; MT omits “Let’s go out to the field.” ^c 4:11 Lit blood from your hand

^d 4:13 Or sin ^e 4:15 LXX, Syr, Vg read “Not so!” ^f 4:15 Or suffer severely ^g 4:20 Lit the dweller of tent and livestock

^h 4:25 The Hb word for given sounds like the name “Seth.” ⁱ 4:25 Lit seed

4:6-7 CHRYSOSTOM: God wishes to defuse the wild frenzy and remove the anger by means of his words. You see, he observed the stages of Cain’s thinking and realized the savagery of his deadly intention. . . . Cain gained nothing from the experience. Such was the degree of difference in [the brothers’] attitudes and the excess of evil intent. **HOMILIES ON GENESIS 18.24.**

4:9-10 ORIGEN: [W]hat was said of Abel, when he was slain by the wicked murderer Cain, is suitable for all whose blood has been shed wickedly. Let us suppose that the verse “The voice of your brother’s blood is crying to [God] from the ground” is said as well for

each of the martyrs, . . . **EXHORTATION TO MARTYRDOM 50.**

4:11-15 CHRYSOSTOM: [S]ince Cain perpetrated practically the same evil as the serpent, which like an instrument served the devil’s purposes, and as the serpent introduced mortality by means of deceit, in like manner Cain deceived his brother, led him out into open country, raised his hand in armed assault against him and committed murder. **HOMILIES ON GENESIS 19.11.**

4:16 ATHANASIUS: By means of righteousness we come into God’s presence, as Moses did when he entered the thick cloud where God was (Ex 19:20). On the other hand, by the practice of evil a per-

son leaves the presence of the Lord. For example, Cain, when he killed his brother, left the Lord’s presence as far as his will was concerned. **FESTAL LETTERS 10. 4:17 AUGUSTINE:** [I]t is recorded of Cain that he built a city, while Abel . . . built none. For the true city of the saints is in heaven, though here on earth it produces citizens in whom it wanders as on a pilgrimage through time looking for the kingdom of eternity. When that day comes, it will gather together all those who, rising in their bodies, shall have that kingdom given to them in which, along with their Prince, the King of Eternity, they shall reign forever and ever. **CITY OF GOD 15.1.**

Twisted Truth—ORIGEN (AD 185–254)

Origen held to much of what the Bible and the apostles taught. He taught that there is only one God, almighty, Creator of the universe; Jesus Christ is the coeternal Son of God—if God is eternally Father, then Jesus is eternally the Son; the Holy Spirit's glory is no less than that of the Father and the Son; there are rewards and punishments in the afterlife; and there will be a final resurrection of the body.

But on this firm foundation of biblical, apostolic doctrines, Origen built some speculative ideas as well. For instance, Origen taught that God first created spirits without bodies and without genders. When some of the spirits fell into sin, God released stage two of creation, this time the material world. God formed our bodies from the earth, made some of them male and others female, and employed them as vessels to hold human souls, which are actually fallen, preexistent spirits.

Another speculative idea is Origen's teaching on reincarnation. He taught that our spirits—or "intellects"—recycle until we get it right. Even the devil, who also is a spirit, gets another chance and is ultimately redeemed. Origen was an influential and world-famous Bible scholar, but he went wrong when he moved away from the Word of God into philosophical speculation.

THE LINE OF SETH

5 This is the document containing the family^A records of Adam.^B On the day that God created man,^C he made him in the likeness of God;² he created them male and female. When they were created, he blessed them and called them mankind.^D

³ Adam was 130 years old when he fathered a son in his likeness, according to his image,

and named him Seth.⁴ Adam lived 800 years after he fathered Seth, and he fathered other sons and daughters.⁵ So Adam's life lasted 930 years; then he died.

⁶ Seth was 105 years old when he fathered Enosh.⁷ Seth lived 807 years after he fathered Enosh, and he fathered other sons and daughters.⁸ So Seth's life lasted 912 years; then he died.

⁹ Enosh was 90 years old when he fathered Kenan.¹⁰ Enosh lived 815 years after he fathered Kenan, and he fathered other sons and daughters.¹¹ So Enosh's life lasted 905 years; then he died.

¹² Kenan was 70 years old when he fathered Mahalalel.¹³ Kenan lived 840 years after he fathered Mahalalel, and he fathered other sons and daughters.¹⁴ So Kenan's life lasted 910 years; then he died.

¹⁵ Mahalalel was 65 years old when he fathered Jared.¹⁶ Mahalalel lived 830 years after he fathered Jared, and he fathered other sons and daughters.¹⁷ So Mahalalel's life lasted 895 years; then he died.

¹⁸ Jared was 162 years old when he fathered Enoch.¹⁹ Jared lived 800 years after he fathered Enoch, and he fathered other sons and daughters.²⁰ So Jared's life lasted 962 years; then he died.

²¹ Enoch was 65 years old when he fathered Methuselah.²² And after he fathered Methuselah, Enoch walked with God 300 years and fathered other sons and daughters.²³ So Enoch's life lasted 365 years.²⁴ Enoch walked with God; then he was not there because God took him.

²⁵ Methuselah was 187 years old when he fathered Lamech.²⁶ Methuselah lived 782 years after he fathered Lamech, and he fathered other sons and daughters.²⁷ So Methuselah's life lasted 969 years; then he died.

^A5:1 Lit written family ^B5:1 Or mankind ^C5:1 Or Adam, human beings ^D5:2 Hb 'adam

5:3-5 ORIGEN: Christ is the invisible image of the invisible God [Col 1:15], just as according to the Scripture narrative we say that the image of Adam was his son Seth. It is written thus: "And Adam begot Seth after his own image and after his own kind." This image preserves the unity of nature and substance common to a father and a son. For "whatever the Father does, the Son does likewise" [Jn 5:19]. In this very fact—that the Son does all things just as the Father does—the Father's image is reproduced in the Son, whose birth from the Father is as it were an act

of his will proceeding from the mind. **ON FIRST PRINCIPLES 1.2.6.**

5:21-24 JOHN CASSIAN: No one will possess the truth and the power of all this unless he has direct experience to teach him. The Lord will have turned the eyes of his heart away from everything of the here and now, and he will think of these [worldly things] as not transitory so much as already gone, smoke scattered into nothing. He walks with God, like Enoch. He is gone from a human way of life, from human concerns. He is no longer to be found amid the vanity of this present world. The text of Genesis

relates that this actually happened to Enoch. . . . The apostle says, "Because of his faith, Enoch was taken up so that he did not have to encounter death" [Heb 11:5]. **CONFERENCES 3.7.3-4.**

5:25-28 JEROME: [T]here are 369 years from the day of Methuselah's birth to the day of Noah's birth; to these add Noah's six hundred years, since the flood occurred in the six hundredth year of his life, and so it works out that Methuselah died in the nine hundred sixty-ninth year of his life, in the same year when the flood began. **HEBREW QUESTIONS ON GENESIS 5.25-29.**

²⁸ Lamech was 182 years old when he fathered a son. ²⁹ And he named him Noah,^a saying, "This one will bring us relief from the agonizing labor of our hands, caused by the ground the LORD has cursed." ³⁰ Lamech lived 595 years after he fathered Noah, and he fathered other sons and daughters. ³¹ So Lamech's life lasted 777 years; then he died.

³² Noah was 500 years old, and he fathered Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

SONS OF GOD AND DAUGHTERS OF MANKIND

6 When mankind began to multiply on the earth and daughters were born to them, ² the sons of God saw that the daughters of mankind were beautiful, and they took any they chose as wives^b for themselves. ³ And the LORD said, "My Spirit will not remain^c with^d mankind forever, because they are corrupt. ^e Their days will be 120 years." ⁴ The Nephilim^f were on the earth both in those days and afterward, when the sons of God came to the daughters of mankind, who bore children to them. They were the powerful men of old, the famous men.

JUDGMENT DECREED

⁵ When the LORD saw that human wickedness was widespread on the earth and that every

inclination of the human mind was nothing but evil all the time, ⁶ the LORD regretted that he had made man on the earth, and he was deeply grieved. ⁷ Then the LORD said, "I will wipe mankind, whom I created, off the face of the earth, together with the animals, creatures that crawl, and birds of the sky — for I regret that I made them." ⁸ Noah, however, found favor with the LORD.

GOD WARNS NOAH

⁹ These are the family records of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless among his contemporaries; Noah walked with God. ¹⁰ And Noah fathered three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

¹¹ Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with wickedness.^h

¹² God saw how corrupt the earth was, for every creature had corrupted its way on the earth.

¹³ Then God said to Noah, "I have decided to put an end to every creature, for the earth is filled with wickedness because of them; therefore I am going to destroy them along with the earth.

¹⁴ "Make yourself an ark of gopherⁱ wood. Make rooms in the ark, and cover it with pitch inside and outside. ¹⁵ This is how you are to make it: The ark will be 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high. ¹⁶ You are to make a

^a 5:29 In Hb, the name *Noah* sounds like "bring us relief." ^b 6:2 Or *women* ^c 6:3 Or *strive* ^d 6:3 Or *in* ^e 6:3 Lit *flesh*

^f 6:4 Possibly means "fallen ones"; traditionally, "giants"; Nm 13:31-33 ^g 6:6 Lit *was grieved to his heart*

^h 6:11 Or *injustice*, also in v. 13 ⁱ 6:14 Unknown species of tree; perhaps pine or cypress

^j 6:15 Or *300 cubits long, 50 cubits wide, and 30 cubits high*

5:32 EPHREM THE SYRIAN: Noah was an example to his sons by his virtue, for [it appears] he had preserved virginity for five hundred years among those of whom it was said, "All flesh corrupted its path" [Gn 6:12]. **COMMENTARY ON GENESIS 6.1.1.**

6:3 EPHREM THE SYRIAN: This generation [that is, those alive in Noah's day] will not live nine hundred years like the previous generations, for it is flesh and its days are filled with the deeds of flesh. Therefore, their days will be one hundred and twenty years. If they repent during this time, they will be saved from the wrath that is about to come upon them. But if they do not repent, by their deeds they will call down wrath upon themselves. Grace granted one hundred and twenty years for repentance to a generation that, according to justice, was not worthy of repentance. **COMMENTARY ON GENESIS 6.4.1.**

6:4 AMBROSE: Must we really consider as different from giants [here translated "Nephilim"] those men who, even

though they are composed of body and soul, despise the most precious good of the soul, that is, the activity of the mind, and show themselves to be imitators of this flesh, as if confirming that they were heirs of their own mother's foolishness. They only struggle in vain when they believe that they will conquer the heaven with their bold desires and their earthly activities. On the contrary, by choosing a lower way of life and despising the higher life, they are condemned with greater severity since they are guilty of voluntary sins. **ON NOAH 4.8.**

BASIL THE GREAT: Strength of arm, swiftness of foot and comeliness of body—the spoils of sickness and the plunder of time—also awaken pride in man, unaware as he is that "All flesh is grass and all the glory of man as the flower of the field. The grass is withered and the flower is fallen" [Is 40:6-7]. Such was the arrogance of the giants because of their strength. Such also was the God-defying pride of the witless Goliath [1Sm 17:4-10]. **HOMILY 20, OF HUMILITY.**

6:8-9 CHRYSOSTOM: He "found favor," but "in the eyes of God"; not simply "he found favor" but "in the eyes of the LORD God." This is said in order to show us that [Noah] had a single purpose, that is, to be praised by that eye that never sleeps or rests. He had no care for human glory or scorn or irreverence. **HOMILIES ON GENESIS 23.4.**

AUGUSTINE: Speaking of Noah, our unerring Scriptures tell us that he "was a just and perfect man in his generation," meaning that he was perfect as far as citizens of the city of God can be perfect during the pilgrimage of this present life, not, of course, as perfect as they are to be in that immortal life in which they will be as perfect as the angels of God. **CITY OF GOD 15.26.**

6:14 AUGUSTINE: Undoubtedly the ark is a symbol of the city of God on its pilgrimage in history. It is a figure of the church that was saved by the wood on which there hung the "Mediator between God and men, himself man, Jesus Christ" [1Tm 2:5]. **CITY OF GOD 15.26.**

roof,^a finishing the sides of the ark to within eighteen inches^b of the roof. You are to put a door in the side of the ark. Make it with lower, middle, and upper decks.

¹⁷“Understand that I am bringing a flood — floodwaters on the earth to destroy every creature under heaven with the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish.”¹⁸ But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark with your sons, your wife, and your sons’ wives.¹⁹ You are also to bring into the ark two of all the living creatures, male and female, to keep them alive with you.²⁰ Two of everything — from the birds according to their kinds, from the livestock according to their kinds, and from the animals that crawl on the ground according to their kinds — will come to you so that you can keep them alive.²¹ Take with you every kind of food that is eaten; gather it as food for you and for them.”²² And Noah did this. He did everything that God had commanded him.

ENTERING THE ARK

7 Then the LORD said to Noah, “Enter the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen that you alone are righteous before me in this generation.² You are to take with you seven pairs, a male and its female, of all the clean animals, and two of the animals that are not clean, a male and its female,³ and seven pairs, male and female, of the birds of the sky — in order to keep offspring alive throughout the earth.⁴ Seven days from now I will make it rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and every living thing I have made I will wipe off the face of the earth.”⁵ And Noah did everything that the LORD commanded him.

⁶Noah was six hundred years old when the flood came and water covered the earth.⁷ So Noah, his sons, his wife, and his sons’ wives entered the ark because of the floodwaters.⁸ From the clean animals, unclean animals, birds, and every creature that crawls on the ground,⁹ two of each, male and female, came to Noah and entered the ark, just as God had commanded him.¹⁰ Seven days later the floodwaters came on the earth.

THE FLOOD

¹¹In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the sources of the vast watery depths burst open, the floodgates of the sky were opened,¹² and the rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights.¹³ On that same day Noah and his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, entered the ark, along with Noah’s wife and his three sons’ wives.¹⁴ They entered it with all the wildlife according to their kinds, all livestock according to their kinds, all the creatures that crawl on the earth according to their kinds, every flying creature — all the birds and every winged creature — according to their kinds.¹⁵ Two of every creature that has the breath of life in it came to Noah and entered the ark.¹⁶ Those that entered, male and female of every creature, entered just as God had commanded him. Then the LORD shut him in.

¹⁷The flood continued for forty days on the earth; the water increased and lifted up the ark so that it rose above the earth.¹⁸ The water surged and increased greatly on the earth, and the ark floated on the surface of the water.¹⁹ Then the water surged even higher on the earth, and all the high mountains under

^a6:16 Or *window*, or *hatch*; Hb uncertain ^b6:16 Lit to a *cubit*

6:18 AMBROSE: Every earthly thing dies with the deluge and only the righteous live forever. Thus the words “I will establish my covenant with you” are addressed to the righteous. He is the heir of divine grace, the recipient of the heavenly inheritance, a sharer of the very holy goods. **ON NOAH 10.35.**

7:4-5 EPHREM THE SYRIAN: God granted one hundred years while the ark was being made to that generation, and still they did not repent. God summoned beasts that they had never seen and still they showed no remorse. He established a state of peace between the predatory animals and those who are preyed upon, and still they had no

awe. God delayed yet seven more days for them, even after Noah and every creature had entered the ark, leaving the gate of the ark open to them. This is a wondrous thing that no lion remembered its jungle and no species of beast or bird visited its customary haunt! Although those of that generation saw all that went on outside and inside the ark, they were still not persuaded to renounce their evil deeds. **COMMENTARY ON GENESIS 6.10.2.**

7:7-9 AUGUSTINE: Was not Noah a holy man, who alone in the whole human race together with his whole house deserved to be delivered from the flood? And is not the church prefigured by

Noah and his sons? They escape the flood, with wood (which symbolizes the cross) carrying them. **TRACTATES ON THE GOSPEL OF JOHN 11.7.2.**

7:16-24 EPHREM THE SYRIAN: “The Lord shut the door [behind] Noah” [v. 16], lest those left behind come at the time of the floods and break down the gate of the ark. The deluge came and “God blotted out all flesh. Only Noah was left and those that were with him in the ark” [v. 23]. The springs of the abyss and the floodgates of heaven were open forty days and forty nights, and the “ark was afloat for one hundred fifty days” [v. 24]. **COMMENTARY ON GENESIS 6.11.2.**

the whole sky were covered.²⁰ The mountains were covered as the water surged above them more than twenty feet.^a ²¹ Every creature perished — those that crawl on the earth, birds, livestock, wildlife, and those that swarm^b on the earth, as well as all mankind.²² Everything with the breath of the spirit of life in its nostrils — everything on dry land died.²³ He wiped out every living thing that was on the face of the earth, from mankind to livestock, to creatures that crawl, to the birds of the sky, and they were wiped off the earth. Only Noah was left, and those that were with him in the ark.²⁴ And the water surged on the earth 150 days.

THE FLOOD RECEDES

8 God remembered Noah, as well as all the wildlife and all the livestock that were with him in the ark. God caused a wind^c to pass over the earth, and the water began to subside.² The sources of the watery depths and the floodgates of the sky were closed, and the rain from the sky stopped.³ The water steadily receded from the earth, and by the end of 150 days the water had decreased significantly.⁴ The ark came to rest in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the mountains of Ararat.

⁵ The water continued to recede until the tenth month; in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains were visible.⁶ After forty days Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made,⁷ and he sent out a raven. It went back and forth until the water had dried up from the earth.⁸ Then he sent out a dove to see whether the water on the earth's surface had gone down,⁹ but the dove found no resting place for its foot. It returned to him in the ark because water covered the surface of

the whole earth. He reached out and brought it into the ark to himself.¹⁰ So Noah waited seven more days and sent out the dove from the ark again.¹¹ When the dove came to him at evening, there was a plucked olive leaf in its beak. So Noah knew that the water on the earth's surface had gone down.¹² After he had waited another seven days, he sent out the dove, but it did not return to him again.¹³ In the six hundred and first year,^d in the first month, on the first day of the month, the water that had covered the earth was dried up. Then Noah removed the ark's cover and saw that the surface of the ground was drying.¹⁴ By the twenty-seventh day of the second month, the earth was dry.

THE LORD'S PROMISE

¹⁵ Then God spoke to Noah,¹⁶ "Come out of the ark, you, your wife, your sons, and your sons' wives with you.¹⁷ Bring out all the living creatures^e that are with you — birds, livestock, those that crawl on the earth — and they will spread over the earth and be fruitful and multiply on the earth."¹⁸ So Noah, along with his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives, came out.¹⁹ All the animals, all the creatures that crawl, and all the flying creatures — everything that moves on the earth — came out of the ark by their families.

²⁰ Then Noah built an altar to the LORD. He took some of every kind of clean animal and every kind of clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar.²¹ When the LORD smelled the pleasing aroma, he said to himself, "I will never again curse the ground because of human beings, even though the inclination of the human heart is evil from youth onward. And I will never again strike down every living thing as I have done.

^a 7:20 *Lit surged 15 cubits* ^b 7:21 *Lit all the swarming swarms* ^c 8:1 *Or spirit*; Gn 1:2 ^d 8:13 = of Noah's life ^e 8:17 *Lit creatures of all flesh*

7:23-24 BEDE: We read in the story of holy Noah . . . how he miraculously escaped the flood which destroyed the impious by being preserved with his household in the ark [see Gn 6:13-19]. From this it is evident to everyone that the Lord who loves righteousness and hates iniquity knows how to deliver the pious from temptation and to punish the impious with the punishment they deserve. **ON THE TABERNACLE 2.7.69.**

8:1-3 AMBROSE: In fact the wind [alone] had no power to dry the deluge. Otherwise the sea, which is moved every day by the winds, would become empty. How would the sea become empty because of

the strength of the winds alone? Isn't it true that the strength that overcame the deluge spread all over the earth to the so-called Columns of Hercules and the vast sea boiling over the tops of the highest mountains? There is no doubt, therefore, that that deluge was subsided by the invisible power of the Spirit, not through the wind as such but through divine intervention. **ON NOAH 16.58.**

8:8-11 BEDE: The olive branch with green leaves is the grace of the Holy Spirit, rich in the words of life, the fullness of which rests upon Christ, [as] the psalm says, "God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your fellows"

[Ps 45:7]. Concerning this gift given to Christ's fellows, John speaks: "You have the anointing from the holy one, and you know all things" [1Jn 2:20]. And by a most beautiful conjunction the figure is in agreement with the fulfillment—a corporeal dove brought the olive branch to the ark which was washed by the waters of the flood; the Holy Spirit descended in the form of a corporeal dove upon the Lord when he was baptized in the waters of the Jordan [see Lk 3:22]. **HOMILY 1.12.** **8:21 AMBROSE:** God punished so that we might fear and forgave so that we might be preserved. He punished once in order to give an example that would

- ²² As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night will not cease."

GOD'S COVENANT WITH NOAH

9 God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.^a The fear and terror of you will be in every living creature on the earth, every bird of the sky, every creature that crawls on the ground, and all the fish of the sea. They are placed under your authority.^a Every creature that lives and moves will be food for you; as I gave the green plants, I have given you everything.^a However, you must not eat meat with its lifeblood in it.^a And I will require a penalty for your lifeblood;^b I will require it from any animal and from any human; if someone murders a fellow human, I will require that person's life.^c

⁶ Whoever sheds human blood, by humans his blood will be shed, for God made humans in his image.

⁷ But you, be fruitful and multiply; spread out over the earth and multiply on it."

⁸ Then God said to Noah and his sons with him, ⁹ "Understand that I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, ¹⁰ and with every living creature that is with you — birds, livestock, and all wildlife of the earth that are with you — all the animals of the

earth that came out of the ark. ¹¹ I establish my covenant with you that never again will every creature be wiped out by floodwaters; there will never again be a flood to destroy the earth."

¹² And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all future generations: ¹³ I have placed my bow in the clouds, and it will be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. ¹⁴ Whenever I form clouds over the earth and the bow appears in the clouds, ¹⁵ I will remember my covenant between me and you and all the living creatures: ^d water will never again become a flood to destroy every creature. ¹⁶ The bow will be in the clouds, and I will look at it and remember the permanent covenant between God and all the living creatures ^e on earth." ¹⁷ God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and every creature on earth."

PROPHECIES ABOUT NOAH'S FAMILY

¹⁸ Noah's sons who came out of the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Ham was the father of Canaan. ¹⁹ These three were Noah's sons, and from them the whole earth was populated.

²⁰ Noah, as a man of the soil, began by planting ^f a vineyard. ²¹ He drank some of the wine, became drunk, and uncovered himself inside his tent. ²² Ham, the father of Canaan, saw his father naked and told his two brothers outside.

^a 9:2 Lit are given in your hand ^b 9:5 Lit And your blood belonging to your life I will seek ^c 9:5 Lit any human; from the hand of a man his brother I will seek the life of the human. ^d 9:15 Lit and creatures of all flesh ^e 9:16 Lit creatures of all flesh ^f 9:20 Or Noah began to be a farmer and planted

have raised fear, but he forgave for the future, so that the bitterness of sin would have not prevailed. One who is intent upon punishing sins too often is considered to be more obstinate than strict. Therefore God says, "I will never again curse the ground because of man," that is, he punishes a few, [and] forgives many, because he intended to show his mercy for the whole of mankind without the necessity of producing in human hearts a false security mixed with a kind of neglect. **ON NOAH 22.80.**

9:3 JUSTIN MARTYR: You [Trypho, a Jew] object that Noah was ordered to make a distinction between the herbs, because we do not now eat every kind of herb. Such a conclusion is inadmissible. I could easily prove, but we will not spend the time now in doing so, that every vegetable is an herb and may be eaten. Now, if we make a distinction between them and refuse to eat some of them, we do so not

because they are common and unclean but because they are bitter, or poisonous or thorny. **DIALOGUE WITH TRYPHO 20.**

9:8-11 CHRYSOSTOM: Just as in human affairs when someone makes a promise he forms an agreement and gives a firm guarantee, so too the good Lord said, "Behold, I make my covenant." God did not say that this massive disaster might come again to those who sin. Rather he said, "Behold, I make my covenant with you *and your offspring after you*." See the Lord's loving kindness: not only with your generation, he says, do I form my agreement, [Noah,] but also in regard to all those coming after you I give this firm guarantee. **HOMILIES ON GENESIS 28.4.**

9:16-17 GREGORY OF NAZIANZUS: Who "binds up the water in the clouds" [Jb 26:8]? The miracle of it—that [God] sets something whose nature is to flow, on clouds, that he fixes it there by his word! Yet he pours out some of it on the face of

the whole earth, sprinkling it to all alike in due season. He does not unleash the entire stock of water—the cleansing of Noah's era was enough, and God most true does not forget his own covenant.

THEOLOGICAL ORATIONS 28.28.

9:20-21 THEODORET OF CYRUS: Why was Noah not blamed for falling into drunkenness? His falling was not due to intemperance but inexperience. For [perhaps] he was the first man to press the fruit of the vine and was ignorant not only of the power of the drink but also of the kind of change it had undergone. Because it ought to be mixed first before being drunk, he suffered drowsiness. There was nothing new about the fact that he was naked. For even now some people sleep naked, sleep having taken away their consciousness. The drunkenness, added to sleep, makes easier a defense of his nakedness. **QUESTIONS ON GENESIS 56.**

²³ Then Shem and Japheth took a cloak and placed it over both their shoulders, and walking backward, they covered their father's nakedness. Their faces were turned away, and they did not see their father naked.

²⁴ When Noah awoke from his drinking and learned what his youngest son had done to him, he said:

Canaan is cursed.

He will be the lowest of slaves to his brothers.

²⁶ He also said:

Blessed be the LORD, the God of Shem; Let Canaan be^a Shem's slave.

²⁷ Let God extend Japheth;^b let Japheth dwell in the tents of Shem; let Canaan be Shem's slave.

²⁸ Now Noah lived 350 years after the flood.

²⁹ So Noah's life lasted 950 years; then he died.

THE TABLE OF NATIONS

10 These are the family records of Noah's sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. They also had sons after the flood.

² Japheth's sons: Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. ³ Gomer's sons: Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah. ⁴ And Javan's sons: Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim.^c

⁵ From these descendants, the peoples of the coasts and islands spread out into their lands according to their clans in their nations, each with its own language.

⁶ Ham's sons: Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan.

⁷ Cush's sons: Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabteca. And Raamah's sons: Sheba and Dedan.

⁸ Cush fathered Nimrod, who began to be powerful in the land. ⁹ He was a powerful hunter in the sight of the LORD. That is why it is said, "Like Nimrod, a powerful hunter in the sight of the LORD."¹⁰ His kingdom started with Babylon, Erech,^d Accad,^e and Calneh,^f in the land of Shinar.^g ¹¹ From that land he went to Assyria and

built Nineveh, Rehoboth-ir, Calah,¹² and Resen, between Nineveh and the great city Calah.

¹³ Mizraim^h fathered the people of Lud, Anam, Lehab, Naphtuh, ¹⁴ Pathrus, Casluh (the Philistines came from them), and Caphtor.

¹⁵ Canaan fathered Sidon his firstborn and Heth,¹⁶ as well as the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Girgashites,¹⁷ the Hivites, the Arkites, the Sinites,¹⁸ the Arvadites, the Zemarites, and the Hamathites. Afterward the Canaanite clans scattered. ¹⁹ The Canaanite border went from Sidon going toward Gerar as far as Gaza, and going toward Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim as far as Lasha.

²⁰ These are Ham's sons by their clans, according to their languages, in their lands and their nations.

²¹ And Shem, Japheth's older brother, also had sons. Shem was the father of all the sons of Eber.

²² Shem's sons were Elam, Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud, and Aram.

²³ Aram's sons: Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash.

²⁴ Arpachshad fatheredⁱ Shelah, and Shelah fathered Eber. ²⁵ Eber had two sons. One was named Peleg,^j for during his days the earth was divided; his brother was named Joktan. ²⁶ And Joktan fathered Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, ²⁷ Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, ²⁸ Obal, Abimael, Sheba, ²⁹ Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. All these were Joktan's sons. ³⁰ Their settlements extended from Mesha to Sephar, the eastern hill country.

³¹ These are Shem's sons by their clans, according to their languages, in their lands and their nations.

³² These are the clans of Noah's sons, according to their family records, in their nations. The nations on earth spread out from these after the flood.

THE TOWER OF BABYLON

11 The whole earth had the same language and vocabulary.^k ² As people^l migrated from the east,^m they found a valley in the land

^a9:26 As a wish or prayer; others interpret the verbs in vv. 26-27 as prophecy: *Canaan will be...* ^b9:27 In Hb, the name *Japheth* sounds like the word "extend." ^c10:4 Some Hb mss, Sam, LXX read *Rodanim*; 1Ch 1:7 ^d10:10 Or *Uruk* ^e10:10 Or *Akkad* ^f10:10 Or *and all of them* ^g10:10 Or *in Babylonia* ^h10:13 = *Egypt* ⁱ10:24 LXX reads *fathered Cainan, and Cainan fathered*; Gn 11:12-13; Lk 3:35-36 ^j10:25 = *Division* ^k11:1 Lit *one lip and the same words* ^l11:2 Lit *they* ^m11:2 Or *migrated eastward*

10:8-10 JEROME: Nimrod, son of [Cush and grandson of Ham], was the first to seize despotic rule over the people, which men were not yet accustomed to; and he reigned in Babylon, which was called Babel, because the languages of those building the tower were thrown into confusion there. For Babel signifies

confusion. **HEBREW QUESTIONS ON GENESIS 10.24-25.**

11:1-4 AUGUSTINE: This city named "Confusion" was none other than Babylon, to whose marvelous construction pagan history brings testimonies. For Babylon means "confusion." It would seem that the founder of the city was

the [mighty hunter] Nimrod [see Gn 10:9-10]. In mentioning him, the Scripture tells us that Babylon was the head of his kingdom, meaning at the head of all the other cities, the capital where the government of the kingdom had its seat. However, the city never reached the kind of completion that the pride



NEW TESTAMENT

MATTHEW

CIRCUMSTANCES OF WRITING

The author did not identify himself in the text. However, the title that ascribes this Gospel to Matthew appears in the earliest manuscripts and is possibly original. Many early church fathers (Papias, Irenaeus, Pantaenus, and Origen) acknowledged Matthew as the author. Papias also contended that Matthew first wrote in Hebrew, implying that this Gospel was later translated into Greek.

Even if Papias was wrong about the original language of the Gospel of Matthew, this does not imply that he and other early church leaders were wrong to identify Matthew as the author of this Gospel. In fact the early church unanimously affirmed that the Gospel of Matthew was authored by the apostle Matthew. It would require impressive evidence to overturn this early consensus.

Determining the date of composition of Matthew's Gospel depends largely on the relationship of the Gospels to one another. Most scholars believe that Matthew utilized Mark's Gospel in writing his own Gospel. If this is correct, Matthew's Gospel must postdate Mark's. However, the date of Mark's Gospel is also shrouded in mystery. Irenaeus (ca AD 180) seems to claim that Mark wrote his Gospel after Peter's death in the mid-60s. However, Clement of Alexandria, who wrote only twenty years after Irenaeus, claimed that Mark wrote his Gospel while Peter was still alive. Given the ambiguity of the historical evidence, a decision must be based on other factors.

The date of composition for Mark is best inferred from the date of Luke and Acts. The abrupt ending of Acts which left Paul under house arrest in Rome implies that Acts was written before Paul's release. Since one of the major themes of Acts is the legality of Christianity in the Roman Empire, one would have expected Luke to mention Paul's release by the emperor if it had already occurred. This evidence dates Acts to the early 60s. Luke and Acts were two volumes of a single work, as the prologues to these books demonstrate. Luke was written before Acts. Given the amount of research that Luke invested in the book and the travel that eyewitness interviews probably required, a date in the late 50s is reasonable. If Luke used Mark in writing his own Gospel, as seems likely, by implication Mark was written some time before the late 50s, perhaps the early to mid-50s. Thus, despite Matthew's dependence on Mark, Matthew

may have been written any time beginning in the mid-50s once Mark was completed.

CONTRIBUTION TO THE BIBLE

As the first book in the NT, the Gospel of Matthew serves as a gateway between the two testaments. Of the NT books, and certainly of the four Gospels, Matthew has the strongest connections to the OT. Matthew gave us God's entire plan from Genesis to Revelation. Matthew looked back and referred to Hebrew prophecies about sixty times ("was fulfilled" and "so that what was spoken ... might be fulfilled"). He also looked forward by dealing not only with Messiah's coming and his ministry, but also his future plan for his church and kingdom.

STRUCTURE

Matthew divided his Gospel into three major sections. He introduced new major sections with the words "from then on Jesus began to" (4:17; 16:21). These transitional statements divide the Gospel into the introduction (1:1–4:16), body (4:17–16:20), and conclusion (16:21–28:20). Matthew also divided his Gospel into five major blocks of teaching, each of which concludes with a summary statement (8:1; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1). Some scholars believe these five major discourses were meant to correspond to the five books of Moses and to confirm Jesus's identity as the new Moses.

AUGUSTINE ON MATTHEW 5:8

Mark well what follows. When the text says, "Blessed are the pure in heart," it refers to those who have been made clean within, for they shall see God. To behold God is the end and purpose of all our loving activity. But it is the end by which we are to be perfected, not the end by which we come to nothing. Note that food is finished in a different way than a garment is finished. Food is finished when it is consumed in the eating. A garment is finished when it is completed in the weaving. Both are finished, but the former's finish means destruction; the latter's, perfection. Whatever we do, whatever good deeds we perform, whatever we strive to accomplish, whatever we laudably yearn for, whatever we blamelessly desire, we shall no longer be seeking any of those things when we reach the vision of God.

THE GENEALOGY OF JESUS CHRIST



n account of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham:

FROM ABRAHAM TO DAVID

- ² Abraham fathered^a Isaac,
Isaac fathered Jacob,
Jacob fathered Judah and his brothers,
- ³ Judah fathered Perez and Zerah by Tamar,
Perez fathered Hezron,
Hezron fathered Aram,
- ⁴ Aram fathered Amminadab,
Amminadab fathered Nahshon,
Nahshon fathered Salmon,
- ⁵ Salmon fathered Boaz by Rahab,
Boaz fathered Obed by Ruth,
Obed fathered Jesse,
- ⁶ and Jesse fathered King David.

FROM DAVID TO THE BABYLONIAN EXILE

- David fathered Solomon^b by Uriah's wife,
- ⁷ Solomon fathered Rehoboam,
Rehoboam fathered Abijah,
Abijah fathered Asa,^c
- ⁸ Asa^c fathered Jehoshaphat,
Jehoshaphat fathered Joram,^d
Joram fathered Uzziah,
- ⁹ Uzziah fathered Jotham,
Jotham fathered Ahaz,
Ahaz fathered Hezekiah,
- ¹⁰ Hezekiah fathered Manasseh,
Manasseh fathered Amon,^e
Amon fathered Josiah,

- ¹¹ and Josiah fathered Jeconiah
and his brothers
at the time of the exile to Babylon.

FROM THE EXILE TO THE CHRIST

- ¹² After the exile to Babylon
Jeconiah fathered Shealtiel,
Shealtiel fathered Zerubbabel,
- ¹³ Zerubbabel fathered Abiud,
Abiud fathered Eliakim,
Eliakim fathered Azor,
- ¹⁴ Azor fathered Zadok,
Zadok fathered Achim,
Achim fathered Eliud,
- ¹⁵ Eliud fathered Eleazar,
Eleazar fathered Matthan,
Matthan fathered Jacob,
- ¹⁶ and Jacob fathered Joseph the husband
of Mary,
who gave birth to Jesus who is called
the Christ.

¹⁷ So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations; and from David until the exile to Babylon, fourteen generations; and from the exile to Babylon until the Christ, fourteen generations.

THE NATIVITY OF THE CHRIST

¹⁸ The birth of Jesus Christ came about this way: After his mother Mary had been engaged^f to Joseph, it was discovered before they came together that she was pregnant from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ So her husband Joseph, being a righteous

^a 1:2 In vv. 2-16 either a son, as here, or a later descendant, as in v. 8 ^b 1:6 Other mss add *King* ^c 1:7,8 Other mss read *Asaph*

^d 1:8 = Jehoram ^e 1:10 Other mss read *Amos* ^f 1:18 Or *betrothed*

1:16 AUGUSTINE: Since he thus related that Christ was born from Mary as a virgin and not as a result of intercourse with Joseph, for what reason does Matthew call him his father, if not because we understand Joseph to be truly the husband of Mary, not through intercourse of the flesh but in virtue of the genuine spiritual union of marriage? . . . All this suggests that Luke's phrase, "as was supposed," [Lk 3:23] was inserted with a view of correcting those of the opinion that [Jesus] was born from Joseph in the same way that others are born. **HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS 2.1.3.**

1:18 CHRYSOSTOM: Do not speculate beyond the text. Do not require of it something more than what it simply says. Do not ask, "But precisely how was it that the Spirit accomplished this in a virgin?"

For even when nature is at work, it is impossible fully to explain the manner of the formation of the person. How then, when the Spirit is accomplishing miracles, shall we be able to express their precise causes? Lest you should weary the writer or disturb him by continually probing beyond what he says, he has indicated who it was that produced the miracle. He then withdraws from further comment. "I know nothing more," he in effect says, "but that what was done was the work of the Holy Spirit."

Shame on those who attempt to pry into the miracle of generation from on high! For this birth can by no means be explained, yet it has witnesses beyond number and has been proclaimed from ancient times as a real birth handled with human hands. What kind of extreme

madness afflicts those who busy themselves by curiously prying into the unutterable generation? For neither Gabriel nor Matthew was able to say anything more, but only that the generation was from the Spirit. But how from the Spirit? In what manner? Neither Gabriel nor Matthew has explained, nor is it possible. Do not imagine that you have untangled the mystery merely by hearing that this is the work of the Spirit. For we remain ignorant of many things, even while learning of them. So how could the infinite One reside in a womb? How could he that contains all be carried as yet unborn by a woman? How could the Virgin bear and continue to be a virgin? Explain to me how the Spirit designed the temple of his body. **THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, HOMILY 4.3.**

man, and not wanting to disgrace her publicly, decided to divorce her secretly.

²⁰ But after he had considered these things, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because what has been conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

²² Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

²³ **See, the virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they will name him Immanuel,^A**

which is translated "God is with us."

²⁴ When Joseph woke up, he did as the Lord's angel had commanded him. He married her

²⁵ but did not have sexual relations with her until she gave birth to a son. ^B And he named him Jesus.

WISE MEN VISIT THE KING

2 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of King Herod, wise men from the east arrived in Jerusalem, ² saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star at its rising and have come to worship him."^C

³ When King Herod heard this, he was deeply disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ So he

assembled all the chief priests and scribes of the people and asked them where the Christ would be born.

⁵ "In Bethlehem of Judea," they told him, "because this is what was written by the prophet:

⁶ **And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah:**

Because out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel."^D

⁷ Then Herod secretly summoned the wise men and asked them the exact time the star appeared. ⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. When you find him, report back to me so that I too can go and worship him."^E

⁹ After hearing the king, they went on their way. And there it was — the star they had seen at its rising. It led them until it came and stopped above the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹ Entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and falling to their knees, they worshiped him. ^F Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹² And being warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their own country by another route.

^A 1:23 Is 7:14 ^B 1:25 Other mss read to her firstborn son ^C 2:2 Or to pay him homage ^D 2:6 Mc 5:2

^E 2:8 Or and pay him homage ^F 2:11 Or they paid him homage

2:1 THEODORE OF MOPSUESTIA: The patriarch Jacob had already anticipated this very time precisely when he said, "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs" [Gn 49:10]. Matthew brought these same prophetic testimonies forward in order to show from them that everything came about according to the words of the prophets. On the one hand, he showed that Christ would come from Bethlehem, as had been said by the prophet [see Mc 5:2]. On the other hand, he demonstrated that this saying of Jacob prefigured that this was to occur "in the days of Herod." First then those who ruled over Israel were from David, from the tribe of Judah (Levi's brother), until the captivity in Babylon. After these things the high priests themselves who held the leadership of the people were of the tribe of Levi, but their lineage was also traced from Judah. An intermixture had occurred between the levitical tribe—especially

the high priests—and the royal tribe of Judah. Afterward, when the brothers Aristobulus and Hyrcanus came into conflict with each other and warred over the monarchy, the kingdom finally settled upon Herod, who was not a Jew by race, for he was the son of Antipater, an Idumean. And it was, in fact, during the time of his kingdom that Christ the Master appeared, when the kings and rulers from among the Jews had ceased. **FRAGMENT 6.**

2:9 CHRYSOSTOM: The star brought them to inquire of the Jews, that their discovery might be made evident to all, and then appeared to them again. Note how fitting was the order of events: the wise men saw the star, were received by the Jews and their king; they heard prophecy to explain what had appeared; the angel instructed them; and then they journeyed from Jerusalem to Bethlehem by the guidance of the star. From all this we learn that this was not an ordinary star, for no other star has this capacity to guide, not merely to move but to beckon,

to "go before them," drawing and guiding them along their way. **THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, HOMILY 7.3.**

2:12 GREGORY THE GREAT: The return of the magi "by another way" home suggests a spiritual interpretation: As they were advised to take another way, so are we. Our home country is the paradise from which we have fallen. We are forbidden to return to it. When we come to know Jesus, we can return along the way by which he returned. We left our paradise by our pride and disobedience, by overvaluing visible things, by succumbing to the tasting of forbidden fruit. We now can return only by weeping and obedience, rejecting visible things, and by curbing our bodily appetites. So let us, like the magi, return to our home country by another way than the way we left it. Our evil inclination led us away from the joys of paradise. Our turning around in repentance summons us to return by another way. In this way, dearly beloved, we are being awakened to the fear of God. Be vigilant. Set before the

THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT

¹³ After they were gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Get up! Take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you. For Herod is about to search for the child to kill him." ¹⁴ So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night, and escaped to Egypt. ¹⁵ He stayed there until Herod's death, so that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled: **Out of Egypt I called my Son.**^A

THE MASSACRE OF THE INNOCENTS

¹⁶ Then Herod, when he realized that he had been outwitted by the wise men, flew into a rage. He gave orders to massacre all the boys in and around Bethlehem who were two years old and under, in keeping with the time he had learned from the wise men. ¹⁷ Then what was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled:

¹⁸ **A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping,^B and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children;**

and she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.^C

THE RETURN TO NAZARETH

¹⁹ After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, ²⁰ saying, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, because those who intended to kill the child are dead." ²¹ So he got up, took the child and his mother, and entered the land of Israel. ²² But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being warned in a dream, he withdrew to the region of Galilee. ²³ Then he went and settled in a town called Nazareth to fulfill what was spoken through the prophets, that he would be called a Nazarene.

THE HERALD OF THE CHRIST

3 In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea ² and saying, "Repent, because the kingdom of heaven

^A2:15 Hs 11:1 ^B2:18 Other mss read *Ramah, lamentation, and weeping,* ^C2:18 Jr 31:15

eyes of your heart the deceitfulness of your works. Take seriously the severity of the final judgment. Consider how strict a judge is coming. He threatens the impenitent with terror. Yet he still gives them time for repentance. He bears with us. He puts off coming for this reason, that he may find fewer to condemn. FORTY GOSPEL HOMILIES 10:7.

2:13-15 PETER CHRYSOLOGUS: Flight then was not occasioned by fear but by what had come through the mystery of prophecy. The Evangelist planted the seed when he thus spoke: "Take the boy and his mother and flee into Egypt." And later, "that what was written might be fulfilled: 'From Egypt have I summoned my son.'" Christ fled so that he might establish the truth of the law, faith in prophecy and the testimony of the psalter. The Lord himself says, "It was needful that what was written in the law and the prophets and the psalms be fulfilled by me" [Lk 24:44]. Christ fled for us, not for himself. Christ fled so that at the right time he might serve as a steward of the sacraments [the divine mysteries]. Christ fled so that by granting absolution he might take away the source of abuses to come and that he might give proof of faith to those who would believe. And finally, Christ fled so that he might bestow on us faith even when we have to flee, because in the face of persecution it is better to flee than

to deny the faith. For Peter, because he was unwilling to flee, denied the Lord. John, lest he deny the Lord, fled. SERMONS 150.11.

2:14 CHRYSOSTOM: Mary, who had never even passed beyond the threshold of her own house, was commanded to undergo this long ordeal of adversity for the sake of this wonderful birth and for her own spiritual labor and development. Isn't this remarkable: While Palestine plots, it is Egypt that receives and preserves the One for whom the plots are designed! This is reminiscent of the patriarch Jacob, who also sought succor in Egypt, anticipating the coming of our Lord. THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, HOMILY 8.2.

2:19-22 HILARY OF POITIERS: After the death of Herod, Joseph was advised by the angel to return to Judea with the boy and his mother. When he returned he heard that Archelaus, son of Herod, was king. So he was afraid to go, but the angel admonished him to cross over into the region of Galilee, and they lived in the city of Nazareth. . . . Joseph resembles the apostles to whom Christ entrusted the spreading of the news about him. Similar to what happened with Joseph after the death of Herod, they must deal with the same people who caused the Lord to suffer. The apostles are commanded to preach to the Jews, for they were sent to the lost sheep of

the house of Israel. But when they saw that the power remained in the hands of inherited faithlessness, they became afraid and retreated. ON MATTHEW 2.1.

2:23 CHROMATIUS OF AQUILEIA: Our Lord and Savior is called "the Nazarene" as much after the name of the place, the city of Nazareth, as from the mystery of the law. For, according to the law, those are called Nazarenes who make an extraordinary vow of chastity to God, maintaining that vow with the hair of their heads, which the ordained law had commanded them to offer as a sacrifice [see Nm 6:1-21]. Therefore, because the author and ruler of every act of sanctity and piety is Christ the Lord, who said through the prophet, "Let them be holy, since I am holy, says the Lord" [Lv 19:2], it was not undeservedly that he was called "the Nazarene." It was he who, following truly what was preordained in the law, offered as a pledge to God the Father the sacrifice of his own body. David spoke about this pledge when he said of the Lord, "Just as Jacob swore an oath to the Lord, he was offered a pledge to God" [Gn 28:20]. The Lord would show himself as the Nazarene at the time when he became a creature of flesh. TRACTATE ON MATTHEW 7.2.

3:1 CHRYSOSTOM: How "in those days"? What days? He does not mean the days when Jesus was a child at Nazareth but thirty years later, when John came, as

has come near!" ³For he is the one spoken of through the prophet Isaiah, who said:

**A voice of one crying out
in the wilderness:
Prepare the way for the Lord;
make his paths straight!^A**

⁴Now John had a camel-hair garment with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵Then people from Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the vicinity of the Jordan were going out to him, ⁶and they were baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.

⁷When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸Therefore produce fruit consistent with^B repentance. ⁹And don't presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you that God is able to raise up children for Abraham from these stones. ¹⁰The ax is already at the root of the trees. Therefore, every tree that doesn't produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

¹¹"I baptize you with^C water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is more powerful than I. I am not worthy to remove^D his sandals. He himself will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹²His winnowing shovel is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn. But the chaff he will burn with fire that never goes out."

THE BAPTISM OF JESUS

¹³Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. ¹⁴But John tried to stop him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and yet you come to me?"

¹⁵Jesus answered him, "Allow it for now, because this is the way for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then John allowed him to be baptized.

¹⁶When Jesus was baptized, he went up immediately from the water. The heavens suddenly

Twisted Truth—MODALISM (CA AD 222)

In the early church there was a group of thinkers called the modalistic monarchians. Modalists did not hesitate to speak of God as Father, Son, and Spirit, but for them these were just names attached to different modes of existence. God is a monad—or a single unitive principle—who expressed himself in three operations or functions. The terms *Father*, *Son*, and *Spirit* do not reflect any real distinctions but rather names applied to the same God who appeared in different times and locations. These distinct roles or "modes" of God functioned according to the purpose and plan of God within the history of salvation. So God revealed himself in the mode of Creator in the Father, the mode of Redeemer in the Son, and the mode of Sanctifier in the Spirit. So, when the Son suffered and died on the cross, the Father also suffered and died, and this is why some modalists were called patripassianists (those who believe the Father suffered and died on the cross).

Today Christians should be careful when using analogies to explain the nature of God. There are many popular analogies including the egg analogy (shell, white, and yolk), the water analogy (water, ice, and steam), or the man analogy (father, husband, and brother). All of these are modalistic, as they do not make a distinction between the particular persons of God. The best way to use the analogies, then, is not to explain what God *is* (because they almost always end up in modalism) but to explain what God *is not*. God eternally exists as one nature in three persons, which is not like any of these analogies.

^A 3:3 Is 40:3 ^B 3:8 Lit fruit worthy of ^C 3:11 Or in ^D 3:11 Or to carry

Luke also testifies. Why then is it said "in those days"? It is common in Scripture to use this rhetorical device: In speaking of something that seems to come immediately after, it also refers to something that comes to pass many years later.

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, HOMILY 10.1.

3:3 CHROMATIUS OF AQUILEIA: Hence John prepared these ways of mercy and truth, faith and justice. Concerning them, Jeremiah also declared, "Stand by the roads, and look, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is, and walk in it" [Jr 6:16]. Because the heav-

enly kingdom is found along these ways, not without good reason John adds, "The kingdom of heaven is near" [v. 2]. So do you want the kingdom of heaven to also be near for you? Prepare these ways in your heart, in your senses and in your soul. Pave within you the way of chastity, the way of faith and the way of holiness. Build roads of justice. Remove every scandal of offense from your heart. For it is written: "Remove the stones from the road" [Is 62:10]. And then, indeed, through the thoughts of your heart and the very movements of your soul, Christ

the King will enter along certain paths. **TRACTATE ON MATTHEW 8.1.**

3:15 CHROMATIUS OF AQUILEIA: The Lord here is testing the faithful deference of service on the part of his servant, but he reveals the mystery of his dispensation by saying, "Let it be so now; for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness. . . ." Therefore the Lord did not want to be baptized for his own sake but for ours, in order to fulfill all righteousness. Indeed, it is only right that whatever someone instructs another to do, he should first do himself. Since the

THE INSEPARABLE OPERATIONS OF THE TRINITY

One key feature of classic Christian reflection on the Trinity is the idea that the three Persons of the Trinity are undivided, or inseparable, in their mission. Augustine defends this view in a homily on the baptism of Jesus (Sermon 52). In the following selection from this homily, he explains how the Father and the Son participate in the works of the incarnation, passion, and resurrection distinctly but inseparably.

=====

The Son indeed and not the Father was born of the virgin Mary; but this very birth of the Son, not of the Father, was the work both of the Father and the Son. The Father indeed suffered not, but the Son, yet the suffering of the Son was the work of the Father and the Son. The Father did not rise again, but the Son, yet the resurrection of the Son was the work of the Father and the Son. . . . It is my place then to prove by testimonies of the sacred books, that the birth, and passion, and resurrection of the Son were in such sort the works of the Father and the Son, that whereas it is the birth, and passion, and resurrection of the Son only, yet these three things which belong to the Son only, were wrought neither by the Father alone, nor by the Son alone, but by the Father and the Son. . . .

¶ I must first teach you concerning the birth of Christ, how it is the work of the Father and the Son, though what the Father and the Son did work pertains only to the Son. I will quote Paul. . . . "But," says he, "when the fullness of time came, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." . . . See, the Father made the Son to be born of a virgin. For "when the fullness of time was come, God sent his Son;" the Father sent his Christ. How did he send him? "Made of a woman, made under the Law." The Father then made him of a woman under the law. . . .

¶ We have then proved that the birth of the Son was the work of the Father; now let us prove that it was the work of the Son also. Now what is the birth of the Son of the virgin Mary? Surely it is his assumption of the form of a servant in the virgin's womb. . . . Now hear how this was the work of the Son also: "Who when he was in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but emptied himself, taking upon him the form of a servant." . . . In [these verses] the Son himself "emptied himself, taking the form of a servant," we see that the birth of the Son was the work also of the Son himself. . . .

¶ Let us also prove that the passion of the Son was the work of the Father and the Son. We may see that the passion of the Son is the work of the Father, since it is written, "Who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all," and that the passion of the Son was his own work also, "Who loved me, and gave himself for me." The Father delivered

up the Son, and the Son delivered up himself. . . . Therefore, as the birth, so the passion of Christ, was not the work of the Son without the Father, nor of the Father without the Son. The Father delivered up the Son, and the Son delivered up himself. . . . Let us then pass on from this point also, and come we to the resurrection.

¶ Let us see the Son indeed, and not the Father, rising again, but both the Father and the Son working the resurrection of the Son. The resurrection of the Son is the work of the Father; for it is written, "As a result of which he exalted him, and gave him a name which is above every name." The Father, therefore, raised the Son to life again, in exalting, and awakening him from the dead. And did the Son also raise himself? Assuredly he did because he said of the temple as the figure of his own body, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it again." Lastly, as the laying down of life has reference to the passion, so the taking it again has reference to the resurrection. . . . "I have power," Jesus says, "to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself, and take it again." . . .

¶ I will summarize it briefly and entrust it to be stored up in your minds as a thing, to my thinking, of the greatest usefulness. The Father was not born of the virgin; yet this birth of the Son from the virgin was the work both of the Father and the Son. The Father suffered not on the cross; yet the passion of the Son was the work both of the Father and the Son. The Father rose not again from the dead; yet the resurrection of the Son was the work both of the Father and the Son. You see then a distinction of Persons, and an inseparableness of operation. Let us not say therefore that the Father does anything without the Son, or the Son anything without the Father.

opened for him,^a and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming down on him.¹⁷ And a voice from heaven said: "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased."

THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS

4 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.² After he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.³ Then the tempter approached him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

⁴ He answered, "It is written: **Man must not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.**"^b

⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city, had him stand on the pinnacle of the temple,⁶ and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written:

**He will give his angels orders
concerning you,
and they will support you
with their hands
so that you will not strike
your foot against a stone.**"^c

⁷ Jesus told him, "It is also written: **Do not test the Lord your God.**"^d

⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor.⁹ And he said to him, "I will give you all these things if you will fall down and worship me."^e

¹⁰ Then Jesus told him, "Go away,^f Satan! For it is written: **Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.**"^g

¹¹ Then the devil left him, and angels came and began to serve him.

MINISTRY IN GALILEE

¹² When he heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee.¹³ He left Nazareth and went to live in Capernaum by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali.¹⁴ This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah:

¹⁵ **Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali,
along the road by the sea,
beyond the Jordan,
Galilee of the Gentiles.**

¹⁶ **The people who live in darkness
have seen a great light,
and for those living in the land of the
shadow of death,
a light has dawned.**^{h,i}

¹⁷ From then on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, because the kingdom of heaven has come near."

THE FIRST DISCIPLES

¹⁸ As he was walking along the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter), and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the sea — for they were fishermen.¹⁹ "Follow me," he told them, "and I will make you fish for^j people."²⁰ Immediately they left their nets and followed him.

²¹ Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and his brother John. They were in a boat with Zebedee their father, preparing their nets, and he called them.²² Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

TEACHING, PREACHING, AND HEALING

²³ Now Jesus began to go all over Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every^k dis-

^a 3:16 Other mss omit for him ^b 4:4 Dt 8:3 ^c 4:6 Ps 91:11-12 ^d 4:7 Dt 6:16 ^e 4:9 Or and pay me homage ^f 4:10 Other mss read

"Get behind me" ^g 4:10 Dt 6:13 ^h 4:16 Lit dawned on them ⁱ 4:15-16 Is 9:1-2 ^j 4:19 Or you fishers of

^k 4:23 Or every kind of

Lord and Master of the human race had come, he wanted to teach by his example what must be done for disciples to follow their Master and for servants their Lord. **TRACTATE ON MATTHEW 13.2-3.**

3:17 HILARY OF POITIERS: A voice from heaven thus spoke: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." God's Son is manifested both by hearing and by sight. Both the witnesses of contemplation and the spoken word are sent from the Lord to an unfaithful people who disregard the prophets. At the same time, we knew from those who were immersed in Christ that after baptism with

water the Holy Spirit would descend to us from the heavenly gates. Then we would be filled with the anointing of heavenly glory and become God's children through the adoption the Father's voice announced. **ON MATTHEW 2.6.**

4:1 THEODORE OF MOPSUESTIA: For since Adam met with luxury in paradise and, through deception, deteriorated to what is worse, it was necessary that [the Spirit] lead Christ into the wilderness in order to enfeeble the devil's force by someone greater in strength. So he fasted for forty nights and days. **FRAGMENT 17.**

4:7 CHRYSOSTOM: What does Christ then do? He is neither indignant nor provoked but with extreme gentleness reasons with him again from the Scriptures, saying, "You shall not [test] the Lord your God," teaching us that we must overcome the devil not by miracles but by forbearance and longsuffering and that we should do nothing at all for display and vainglory. **THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, HOMILY 13.4.**

4:23 CHROMATIUS OF AQUILEIA: Isaiah predicted this would happen when he said, "He himself took our infirmities and bore our sickness" [Is 53:4]. To this

ease and sickness^a among the people.²⁴ Then the news about him spread throughout Syria. So they brought to him all those who were afflicted, those suffering from various diseases and intense pains, the demon-possessed, the epileptics, and the paralytics. And he healed them.²⁵ Large crowds followed him from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan.

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

5 When he saw the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him.² Then^b he began to teach them, saying:

THE BEATITUDES

³ "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs.

⁴ Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

⁵ Blessed are the humble, for they will inherit the earth.

⁶ Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

⁷ Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

⁸ Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

⁹ Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.

¹⁰ Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs.

¹¹ "You are blessed when they insult you and persecute you and falsely say every kind of evil

^a 4:23 Or physical ailment ^b 5:2 Lit Then opening his mouth

end the teacher of life and heavenly physician Christ the Lord had come that by his direction he might educate people to life and with his heavenly medicine cure the sickness of body and soul, that he might free bodies beset by the devil and restore those persons afflicted by various infirmities to true and complete health. By the word of divine power he cured the weaknesses of the body, but by the medicine of heavenly teaching he healed the wounds of the soul. David clearly noted that the wounds of the soul are healed by God alone when he said, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits" [Ps 103:2], to which he added, "who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases" [v. 3]. He is the true and perfect physician therefore who gives healing to the body and restores the soul to health: our Lord and Savior. **TRACTATE ON MATTHEW 16.4.**

4:24 CHRYSOSTOM: But we must ask how it could be that he demanded faith of none of those he healed. For he did not here say what we later find him saying, [as in Mt 9:28,] "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" He had not yet given proof of his power. The very act of approaching him and of bringing others to him exhibited no small faith. For they brought them even long distances. They would never have brought them unless they had persuaded themselves of great things concerning him. **THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, HOMILY 14.3.**

shall walk from strength to strength; God shall look down upon Zion" [Ps 84:7]. That is to say, the Son of God, who gave blessings to the apostles on Zion. On this mountain he also gave his apostles a blessing. He is the One who had once handed down the Mosaic law on Mt. Sinai, showing that he was the author of both laws. . . . When the law was first given on the mountain, the people were forbidden to draw close. But now, as the Lord was teaching on the mountain, no one is forbidden. Rather, all are invited that they may hear, because there is severity in the law and grace in the gospel. In the former case, terror is instilled in the unbelievers. In the latter case, a gift of blessings is poured out on the believers. **TRACTATE ON MATTHEW 17.1.3-4.**

5:3 HILARY OF POITIERS: The Lord taught by way of example that the glory of human ambition must be left behind when he said, "The Lord your God shall you adore and him only shall you serve" [Dt 6:13; Lk 4:8]. And when he announced through the prophets that he would choose a people humble and in awe of his words, he introduced the perfect Beatitude as humility of spirit. Therefore he defines those who are inspired as people aware that they are in possession of the heavenly kingdom. . . . Nothing belongs to anyone as being properly one's own, but all have the same things by the gift of a single parent. They have been given the first things needed to come into life and have been supplied with the means to use them. **ON MATTHEW 4.2.**

5:7 CHRYSOSTOM: Jesus speaks here not only of those who show mercy by

giving worldly goods but also of those who demonstrate mercy in their actions. There are many ways to show mercy. The commandment is broad in its implications. What reward can people expect if they obey the commandment? "They obtain mercy."

The reward at first glance appears to be an equal reimbursement, but actually the reward from God is much greater than human acts of goodness. For whereas we ourselves are showing mercy as human beings, we are obtaining mercy from the God of all. Human mercy and God's mercy are not the same thing. As wide as the interval is between corrupted and perfect goodness, so far is human mercy distinguished from divine mercy. **THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, HOMILY 15.4.**

5:10 CHROMATIUS OF AQUILEIA: Not without reason did the Lord previously mention hungering and thirsting for justice [v. 6]. He instructs us so to thirst in our desire for justice that for its sake we should despise the world's persecutions, the punishments of the body and death itself. The martyrs above all are the epitome of those who for the righteousness of faith and the name of Christ endure persecution in this world. To them a great hope is promised, namely, the possession of the kingdom of heaven. The apostles were chief examples of this blessedness, and with them all the just people who for the sake of righteousness were afflicted with various persecutions. Due to their faith they have come into the heavenly realms. **TRACTATE ON MATTHEW 17.8.1-2.**

against you because of me.¹² Be glad and rejoice, because your reward is great in heaven. For that is how they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

BELIEVERS ARE SALT AND LIGHT

¹³“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt should lose its taste, how can it be made salty?^a It’s no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled under people’s feet.

¹⁴“You are the light of the world. A city situated on a hill cannot be hidden.¹⁵ No one lights a lamp and puts it under a basket, but rather on a lampstand, and it gives light for all who are in the house.¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

CHRIST FULFILLS THE LAW

¹⁷“Don’t think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to abolish but to fulfill.¹⁸ For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter^b or one stroke of a letter will pass away from the law until all things are accomplished.¹⁹ Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these com-

mands and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever does and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.²⁰ For I tell you, unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never get into the kingdom of heaven.

MURDER BEGINS IN THE HEART

²¹“You have heard that it was said to our ancestors, **Do not murder**,^c and whoever murders will be subject to judgment.²² But I tell you, everyone who is angry with his brother or sister^d will be subject to judgment. Whoever insults^e his brother or sister, will be subject to the court.^f Whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be subject to hellfire.^g²³ So if you are offering your gift on the altar, and there you remember that your brother or sister has something against you,²⁴ leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled with your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift.²⁵ Reach a settlement quickly with your adversary while you’re on the way with him to the court, or your adversary will hand you over to the judge, and the judge to^h the officer, and you will be thrown into prison.²⁶ Truly I tell you,

^a 5:13 Or *how can the earth be salted?* ^b 5:18 Or *not one iota*; *iota* is the smallest letter of the Gk alphabet. ^c 5:21 Ex 20:13; Dt 5:17

^d 5:22 Other mss add *without a cause* ^e 5:22 Lit *Whoever says ‘Raca’*; an Aramaic term of abuse that puts someone down, insulting one’s intelligence ^f 5:22 Lit *Sanhedrin* ^g 5:22 Lit *the gehenna of fire* ^h 5:25 Other mss read *judge will hand you over to*

5:13 ORIGEN: Salt is useful for so many purposes in human life! . . . Now is the proper time to say why Jesus’s disciples are compared with salt. Salt preserves meats from decaying into stench and worms. It makes them edible for a longer period. They would not last through time and be found useful without salt. So also Christ’s disciples, standing in the way of the stench that comes from the sins of idolatry and fornication, support and hold together this whole earthly realm. **FRAGMENT 91.**

5:14 CHRYSOSTOM: You are the light of the world—not of a single nation nor of twenty cities but of the entire inhabited earth. You are like a light for the mind, far better than any particular sunbeam. Similarly, you are spiritual salt. First you are salt. Then you are light. The metaphors of salt and light drive home the great benefit of these stinging words and the profit of this rigorous discipline, how it binds and does not permit us to become dissolute in our behavior. **THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, HOMILY 15-7.**

5:18 CHROMATIUS OF AQUILEIA: [Christ] fulfilled the law at the time

by completing the sacrifices of the law and all the examples prefigured in himself . . . by accepting a body. Certainly he fulfilled the law at the time he confirmed with evangelical grace the precepts of the law he had given. He proceeds to demonstrate he had come to fulfill the law: “Until heaven and earth pass away, not one iota, not a dot, shall be lost from the law until all is accomplished.” Therefore we know from Christ’s teaching how true and divine is the preaching of the law. The Lord reveals that not a single iota or a dot will be lost. **TRACTATE ON MATTHEW 20.1.3–4.**

5:19 CHRYSOSTOM: For what reason then does he call some of these commandments “least,” though they are so magnificent and lofty? Jesus spoke this way because he was about to introduce his own teaching as a new law. As he humbles himself and speaks of himself with great modesty, so he refers to his own teaching in the same manner. In this way Jesus teaches us to practice humility in everything. And besides, since some suspected his teaching to be a new departure, he temporarily taught it in

a more reserved way. **THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, HOMILY 16.**

5:23–24 CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA: The statement “if you should bring your gift” shows that this is conceived as a means of salvation and as an escape from punishment for sinners. For this God invented repentance. One will avert punishment, however, who tends to the feelings of another who has been wounded. But one who does not love his brother does not love the Lord. Hence it is fitting that whoever bears hard feelings toward his brother is not accepted, since he does not approach the Lord in truth. **FRAGMENT 50.**

5:24 AUGUSTINE: In the spiritual sense therefore we may understand faith as an altar in the inner temple of God, to which the visible altar symbolically points. Whatever gift we offer to God—whether it be prophecy, or doctrine, or prayer, or a hymn, or a psalm, or whatever other spiritual gifts of this kind may come to mind—cannot be acceptable to God unless it is held up by sincere faith and firmly and immovably fixed on it, so that our words may be pure and undefiled. **SERMON ON THE MOUNT 1.10.27.**

you will never get out of there until you have paid the last penny.^A

ADULTERY BEGINS IN THE HEART

²⁷ "You have heard that it was said, **Do not commit adultery.**^B ²⁸ But I tell you, everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. ²⁹ If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of the parts of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. ³⁰ And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of the parts of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.

DIVORCE PRACTICES CENSURED

³¹ "It was also said, **Whoever divorces his wife must give her a written notice of divorce.**^C ³² But I tell you, everyone who divorces his wife, except in a case of sexual immorality, causes her to commit adultery. And whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

TELL THE TRUTH

³³ "Again, you have heard that it was said to our ancestors, **You must not break your oath, but you must keep your oaths to the Lord.**^D ³⁴ But I tell you, don't take an oath at all: either by heav-

en, because it is God's throne;³⁵ or by the earth, because it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, because it is the city of the great King. ³⁶ Do not swear by your head, because you cannot make a single hair white or black. ³⁷ But let your 'yes' mean 'yes,' and your 'no' mean 'no.' Anything more than this is from the evil one.

GO THE SECOND MILE

³⁸ "You have heard that it was said, **An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.**^E ³⁹ But I tell you, don't resist^F an evildoer. On the contrary, if anyone slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. ⁴⁰ As for the one who wants to sue you and take away your shirt, let him have your coat as well. ⁴¹ And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two. ⁴² Give to the one who asks you, and don't turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

⁴³ "You have heard that it was said, **Love your neighbor**^G and hate your enemy. ⁴⁴ But I tell you, love your enemies^H and pray for those who^I persecute you, ⁴⁵ so that you may be^J children of your Father in heaven. For he causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. ⁴⁶ For if you love those who love you, what reward will you have? Don't even the tax collectors do the

^A 5:26 *Lit quadrans*, the smallest and least valuable Roman coin, worth 1/64 of a daily wage ^B 5:27 Ex 20:14; Dt 5:18 ^C 5:31 Dt 24:1

^D 5:33 Lv 19:12; Nm 30:2; Dt 23:21 ^E 5:38 Ex 21:24; Lv 24:20; Dt 19:21 ^F 5:39 *Or don't set yourself against, or don't retaliate against*

^G 5:43 Lv 19:18 ^H 5:44 *Other mss add bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you,*

^I 5:44 *Other mss add mistreat you and* ^J 5:45 *Or may become, or may show yourselves to be*

5:31 CHROMATIUS OF AQUILEIA: In all things our Lord and Savior reforms for the better the justice of the ancient law. Indeed, it seems that long ago a license for divorce was granted by Moses on tenuous grounds to the Jewish people who were living licentiously and serving their pleasures [see Dt 24:1]. This was due not to the system of law but to the unbridled pleasure of a carnal people unable to uphold the righteousness of the law according to rigorous standards.

This concession was allowed, according to what the Lord himself said in another place in his reply to the inquiring Sadducees. For when they asked why Moses had allowed a bill of divorce to be given, the Lord answered, "Moses, by reason of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to put away your wives, but it was not so from the beginning" [Mt 19:8]. And now, not without good

reason does our Lord and Savior, with that license removed, restore the precepts of his former constitution. For he orders that chaste wedlock be preserved by indissoluble law, showing that the law of marriage was first instituted by himself. For he said, "What therefore God has joined together, let no one put asunder" [Mk 10:9]. **TRACTATE ON MATTHEW 24.1.1-3.**

5:33 HILARY OF POITIERS: The law had prescribed a penalty for false swearing, so that the ritual of an oath might hold false testimony in check. . . . But faith removes the need for using an oath. It establishes in truth the dealings of our life. Once the inclination to deceive has been checked, it enjoins simplicity in speaking and hearing. . . . Therefore those who are living in the simplicity of faith have no need for the ritual of an oath. With such people, what is, always is, and what is not, is not. For this reason,

their every word and deed are always truthful. **ON MATTHEW 4.23.**

5:44-45 AUGUSTINE: With regard to what immediately follows, namely, "That you may be children of your Father who is in heaven," it is to be understood in the sense in which John also speaks when he says, "He gave them the power of becoming children of God" [Jn 1:12]. For there is One who is the Son by nature, and he absolutely knows no sin. But since we have received the power to become sons, we are made sons insofar as we fulfill the precepts that have been given by the Son. "Adoption" is the term used by the apostle to denote the character of our vocation to the eternal inheritance, in order to be joint heirs with Christ [see Gl 4:4-5]. By spiritual regeneration we therefore become sons and are adopted into the kingdom of God, not as aliens but as his creatures and offspring. **SERMON ON THE MOUNT 1.23.78.**

same? ⁴⁷ And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what are you doing out of the ordinary? ^A Don't even the Gentiles ^B do the same?

⁴⁸ Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Blessed is the one who loves you, his friend in you, and his enemy in you. For he alone does not lose those he loves, if he loves all of them in you who cannot be lost. And who is this but our God, the God who made heaven and earth?

—AUGUSTINE'S CONFESSIONS 4.14

HOW TO GIVE

6 “Be careful not to practice your righteousness ^C in front of others to be seen by them. Otherwise, you have no reward with your Father in heaven. ² So whenever you give to the poor, don't sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be applauded by people. Truly I tell you, they have their reward. ³ But when you give to the poor, don't let your left hand know what your

right hand is doing, ⁴ so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. ^D

HOW TO PRAY

⁵ “Whenever you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites, because they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by people. Truly I tell you, they have their reward. ⁶ But when you pray, go into your private room, shut your door, and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. ^E ⁷ When you pray, don't babble like the Gentiles, since they imagine they'll be heard for their many words. ⁸ Don't be like them, because your Father knows the things you need before you ask him.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

⁹ “Therefore, you should pray like this:

Our Father in heaven,
your name be honored as holy.

¹⁰ Your kingdom come.
Your will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us today our daily bread. ^F

^A 5:47 Or doing that is superior; lit doing more ^B 5:47 Other mss read tax collectors ^C 6:1 Other mss read charitable giving

^D 6:4 Other mss read will himself reward you openly ^E 6:6 Other mss add openly

^F 6:11 Or our necessary bread, or our bread for tomorrow

6:1 CHRYSOSTOM: When Jesus warned, “Beware of practicing your piety before men,” he then added pointedly, “to be seen by them.” On first glance it seems as if the same thing were being repeated, but if you were carefully to pay attention, you will note a careful distinction. Alms may be given in the presence of others primarily to be seen by them, or they may be given in the presence of others but not to be seen, or they may be openly given in order to be seen but still not be seen, or they may be given quietly and still be seen. He is not focusing simply on the outward act done but the inward intent. **THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, HOMILY 19.2.**

6:2 CHROMATIUS OF AQUILEIA: Earlier Jesus taught that the work of justice is to be done not for the sake of humans but for the sake of God [see Mt 5:43-48]. Now we are also instructed that we should not blow the trumpet when we perform acts of charity. That is, we should not broadcast what we do, because it is not the mark of a devout mind to do any of the works of God in order to anticipate the glory of human praise. Many people, you see, make a donation for the use of the poor in order to reap from the gesture

the human praise and the renown of their contemporaries. The Lord shows that they have received the reward of their work in this age. For as long as they seek the glory of this age, they lose the reward of the future promise. **TRACTATE ON MATTHEW 26.4.2.**

6:6 AUGUSTINE: Outside the inner chamber are all things in time and space, which knock on the door. Through our bodily senses they clamor to interrupt our prayer, so that prayer is invaded with a crowd of vain phantoms. This is why you must shut the door. The senses of the body are resisted, that the spirit of prayer may be directed to the Father. This occurs in the inmost heart, where prayer is offered to the Father in secret. There “your Father who sees in secret will reward you.” This is a fitting conclusion to good counsel, not merely calling us to pray but also showing us how, not merely calling us to give alms but also showing the right spirit for doing so. The instruction is to cleanse the heart. Nothing cleanses the heart but the undivided and single-minded striving after eternal life from the pure love of wisdom alone. **SERMON ON THE MOUNT 2.3.11.**

6:10-11 TERTULLIAN: When we pray “thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven,” we do not imply that anyone could prevent the fulfillment of God's will or that he needs our prayer to accomplish his will. Rather, we pray that his will be done in all. Think of heaven and earth as a picture of our very selves, spirit and flesh. The sense of the petition is the same, namely, that in us (as spirit and flesh, as heaven and earth combined) the will of God may be done on earth as it is in heaven. Now, what does God will more than that we ourselves walk according to his ways? We ask therefore that he supply us with the energy of his own will and the capacity to do it, that we may be saved, both in heaven and on earth. The sum of his will is the salvation of those whom he has adopted. **ON PRAYER 4.1-2.**

6:11 CHRYSOSTOM: What is daily bread? Just enough for one day. Here Jesus is speaking to people who have natural needs of the flesh, who are subject to the necessities of nature. He does not pretend that we are angels. He condescends to the infirmity of our nature in giving us his commands. The severity of nature does not permit you to go without food.

¹² And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

¹³ And do not bring us into ^atemptation,
but deliver us from the evil one. ^b

¹⁴ "For if you forgive others their offenses,
your heavenly Father will forgive you as well.

¹⁵ But if you don't forgive others, ^c your Father
will not forgive your offenses.

HOW TO FAST

¹⁶ "Whenever you fast, don't be gloomy like
the hypocrites. For they make their faces un-
attractive ^d so that their fasting is obvious to
people. Truly I tell you, they have their reward.

¹⁷ But when you fast, put oil on your head and
wash your face, ¹⁸ so that your fasting isn't ob-
vious to others but to your Father who is in se-
cret. And your Father who sees in secret will
reward you. ^e

GOD AND POSSESSIONS

¹⁹ "Don't store up for yourselves treasures ^f on
earth, where moth and rust destroy and where
thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ But store up for

yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither
moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves don't
break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure
is, there your heart will be also.

²² "The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eye
is healthy, your whole body will be full of light.

²³ But if your eye is bad, your whole body will
be full of darkness. So if the light within you is
darkness, how deep is that darkness!

²⁴ "No one can serve two masters, since either
he will hate one and love the other, or he will
be devoted to one and despise the other. You
cannot serve both God and money.

THE CURE FOR ANXIETY

²⁵ "Therefore I tell you: Don't worry about your
life, what you will eat or what you will drink;
or about your body, what you will wear. Isn't
life more than food and the body more than
clothing? ²⁶ Consider the birds of the sky: They
don't sow or reap or gather into barns, yet your
heavenly Father feeds them. Aren't you worth
more than they? ²⁷ Can any of you add one mo-
ment to his life span ^g by worrying? ²⁸ And why
do you worry about clothes? Observe how the

^a 6:13 Or do not cause us to come into ^b 6:13 Or from evil; some later mss add For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. ^c 6:15 Other mss add their wrongdoing ^d 6:16 Or unrecognizable, or disfigured

^e 6:18 Other mss add openly ^f 6:19 Or valuables ^g 6:27 Or add a single cubit to his height

So for the maturing of your life, he says, I require necessary food, not a complete freedom from natural necessities. But note how even in things that are bodily, spiritual correlations abound. For it is not for riches or frills that we pray. It is not for wastefulness or extravagant clothing that we pray, but only for bread. And only for bread on a daily basis, so as not to "worry about tomorrow" [Mt 6:34].

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, HOMILY 19.5.

6:13 CHRYSOSTOM: Jesus here calls the devil "the wicked one," commanding us to wage against him a war that knows no truce. Yet he is not evil by nature, for evil is not something derived from any nature as created but is what has been added to nature by choice. The devil is the prototypically evil one, because of the excess of his evil choices and because he who in no respect was injured by us wages against us an implacable war. Thus we do not pray "deliver us from the wicked ones" in the plural but "from the wicked one." THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, HOMILY 19.6.

6:20 AUGUSTINE: Let us not think that in this text the word *heaven* signifies the universe of heavenly bodies, for the word *earth* includes every kind of body,

for one ought to disregard the whole world when laying up treasure in heaven. Therefore the reference is to that heaven of which it is said, "The heaven of heaven is the Lord's" [Ps 115:16]. Moreover, since we ought to fix our treasure and our heart on that which will abide forever and not on something which will pass away, the heaven here mentioned means the spiritual firmament, for "heaven and earth will pass away" [Mt 24:35]. SERMON ON THE MOUNT 2.13.44.

6:22-23 CHRYSOSTOM: Christ leads us to an analogy more within the reach of our senses, that we may not be confused. He has already spoken of the mind as enslaved in captivity. Now he shifts his attention to the eye and to lessons on outward things lying directly before our eyes, so that we might grasp it easily and that we may learn from the body what we did not learn from the mind. For what the mind is to the soul, the eye is to the body. THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, HOMILY 20.3.

6:24 CHRYSOSTOM: Now Jesus calls mammon here "a master," not because of its own nature but on account of the wretchedness of those who bow themselves beneath it. . . . To have mammon for your master is already worse itself than

any later punishment and enough retri-
bution before the punishment for anyone
trapped in it. For what condemned crim-
inals can be so wretched as those who,
once having God for their Lord, do from
that mild rule desert to this grievous
obsession for money? Even in this life
such idolatry trails immense harm in its
path, with losses unspeakable. Think of
the lawsuits! The harassments, the strife
and toil and blinding of the soul! More
grievous, one falls away thereby from the
highest blessing—to be God's servant.

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, HOMILY 21.2.

6:27-30 CHRYSOSTOM: Do you see how Jesus clarifies what has been obscure by comparing it to what is self-evident? Can you add one cubit, or even the slightest measure, to your bodily life span by worrying about it? Can you by being anxious about food add moments to your life? Hence it is clear that it is not our diligence but the providence of God, even where we seem to be active, that finally accompanies everything. In the light of God's providence, none of our cares, anxieties, toils or any other such things will ever come to anything, but all will utterly pass away. THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, HOMILY 21.3.

PRAYING TO GOD AS FATHER

The second-century Christian, Tertullian, wrote a treatise called *On Prayer*, in which he covers various topics on prayer including when you should pray and whether or not one should kneel when praying. In the opening portion of the work (chaps. 2–9), however, he explains the Lord's Prayer, which for Tertullian contained the "epitome of the whole Gospel" (chap. 1). The following selection contains his exposition of the first two clauses (chaps. 2–3) where he explains what it means to pray, "Our Father who art in the heavens, hallowed be your name."

The prayer begins with a testimony to God, and with the reward of faith, when we say, "Our Father who is in the heavens;" for (in so saying), we at once pray to God, and commend faith, whose reward this appellation is. . . . [O]ur Lord very frequently proclaimed God as a Father to us, . . . even [giving] a precept "that we call no one on earth father, but the Father whom we have in the heavens" (Mt 23:9), and so, in thus praying, we are likewise obeying the precept. Happy they who recognize their Father! . . . [I]n the Father the Son is invoked for Jesus says "I and the Father are one" (Jn 10:30). . . .

¶ The name of "God the Father" had been published to none. Even Moses, who had interrogated him on that very point, had heard a different name. To us it has been revealed in the Son, for the Son is now the Father's new name. "I have come," he says, "in the Father's name" (Jn 5:43), and again, "Father, glorify your name" (Jn 7:28), and more openly, "I have manifested your name to men" (Jn 17:6). That name, therefore, we pray may "be hallowed." Not that it is becoming for men to wish God well, as if there were any other by whom he may be wished well, or as if God would suffer unless we do so wish. Plainly, it is universally becoming for God to be blessed in every place and time, on account of the memory of his benefits ever due from every man. But this petition also serves the turn of a blessing. Otherwise, when is the name of God not "holy," and "hallowed" through himself, seeing that of himself he sanctifies all others—he to whom that surrounding circle of angels cease not to say, "Holy, holy, holy?" Likewise, therefore, we . . . begin even here on earth to learn by heart that strain hereafter to be raised to God, and the function of future glory. So far, for the glory of God. On the other hand, for our own petition, when we say, "Hallowed be your name," we pray this, that it may be hallowed in us who are in him, as well in all others for whom the grace of God is still waiting, and that we may obey this precept, too, in "praying for all," even for our personal enemies. . . .

wildflowers of the field grow: They don't labor or spin thread.²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was adorned like one of these.³⁰ If that's how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and thrown into the furnace tomorrow, won't he do much more for you — you of little faith?³¹ So don't worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?'³² For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.³³ But seek first the kingdom of God^a and his righteousness, and all these things will be provided for you.³⁴ Therefore don't worry about tomorrow, because tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

DO NOT JUDGE

7 "Do not judge, so that you won't be judged.² For you will be judged by the same standard with which you judge others, and you will be measured by the same measure you use.³ Why do you look at the splinter in your brother's eye but don't notice the beam of wood in your own eye?⁴ Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the splinter out of your eye,' and look, there's a beam of wood in your own eye?⁵ Hypocrite! First take the beam of wood out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to take the

splinter out of your brother's eye.⁶ Don't give what is holy to dogs or toss your pearls before pigs, or they will trample them under their feet, turn, and tear you to pieces.

ASK, SEARCH, KNOCK

7 "Ask, and it will be given to you. Seek, and you will find. Knock, and the door^b will be opened to you.⁸ For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.⁹ Who among you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone?¹⁰ Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake?¹¹ If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him.¹² Therefore, whatever you want others to do for you, do also the same for them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

ENTERING THE KINGDOM

13 "Enter through the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the road broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who go through it.¹⁴ How narrow is the gate and difficult the road that leads to life, and few find it.

15 "Be on your guard against false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravaging wolves.¹⁶ You'll recognize them

^a6:33 Other mss omit of God ^b7:7 Lit and it

7:3-5 CHRYSOSTOM: Here Christ wants to show the great outrage he has toward people who do such things. For wherever he wants to show that the sin is great and that the punishment and anger for it is great, he begins with an open rebuke. For example, to show that he was provoked to anger he said to the man who was demanding the hundred silver coins, "Wicked slave, I forgave you all that debt" [Mt 18:32]. In the same way also here he says, "Hypocrite." For the verdict that one's brother needs a splinter taken from his eye does not come from concern but from contempt for humanity. Even while one is putting on a mask of love toward others, one is actually performing a deed of consummate evil by inflicting numerous criticisms and accusations on close companions, thereby usurping the rank of teacher when one is not even worthy to be a disciple. For this reason [Christ] called this one "hypocrite."

So then, you who are so spiteful as to see even the little faulty details in others, how have you become so careless with

your own affairs that you avoid your own major faults? "First remove the plank from your eye." You see that Jesus does not forbid judging but commands that one first remove the plank from one's own eye. One may then set right the issues relating to others. For each person knows his own affairs better than others know them. And each one sees major faults easier than smaller ones. And each one loves oneself more than one's neighbor. So if you are really motivated by genuine concern, I urge you to show this concern for yourself first, because your own sin is both more certain and greater. **THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, HOMILY 23.2.**

7:7-8 CHRYSOSTOM: Jesus did not simply command us to ask but to ask with great concern and concentration—for this is the meaning of the word he used for "seek." For those who are seeking put aside everything else from their minds. They become concerned only with the thing that they are seeking and pay no attention at all to the circumstances. Even those who are looking for

gold . . . understand what I am saying. So this is what he meant by seeking. But by knocking Jesus meant that we approach God with intensity and passion. Therefore, O mortal, do not give up. Do not showless eagerness for virtue than desire for possessions. For you frequently sought possessions but did not find them. Nevertheless, although you knew that you could not guarantee that you would find them, you used every means of searching for them. Yet even though in this case you have a promise that you surely will receive, you do not even demonstrate the smallest fraction of that same eagerness. But if you do not receive immediately, do not despair in this way. For it is because of this that Jesus said "knock" to show that even if he does not open the door immediately we should remain at the door knocking.

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, HOMILY 23.4.
7:15-16 CHRYSOSTOM: It does not seem to me that "false prophets" here refers to the heretics but rather to persons who live morally corrupt lives while wearing a mask of virtue. They are usually

by their fruit. Are grapes gathered from thorn-bushes or figs from thistles? ¹⁷ In the same way, every good tree produces good fruit, but a bad tree produces bad fruit. ¹⁸ A good tree can't produce bad fruit; neither can a bad tree produce good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that doesn't produce good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ So you'll recognize them by their fruit.

²¹ "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven.

²² On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, didn't we prophesy in your name, drive out demons in your name, and do many miracles in your name?' ²³ Then I will announce to them, 'I never knew you. **Depart from me, you law-breakers!**' ^{A,B}

THE TWO FOUNDATIONS

²⁴ "Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵ The rain fell, the rivers rose, and the winds blew and pounded that house. Yet it didn't collapse,

because its foundation was on the rock. ²⁶ But everyone who hears these words of mine and doesn't act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. ²⁷ The rain fell, the rivers rose, the winds blew and pounded that house, and it collapsed. It collapsed with a great crash."

²⁸ When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, ²⁹ because he was teaching them like one who had authority, and not like their scribes.

A MAN CLEANSED

8 When he came down from the mountain, large crowds followed him. ² Right away a man with leprosy^c came up and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean."

³ Reaching out his hand, Jesus touched him, saying, "I am willing; be made clean." Immediately his leprosy was cleansed. ⁴ Then Jesus told him, "See that you don't tell anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

^A 7:23 Lit you who work lawlessness ^B 7:23 Ps 6:8 ^C 8:2 Gk leprosy; a term for various skin diseases, also in v. 3; see Lv 13-14

called frauds by most people. For this reason Jesus continued by saying, "By their fruits you will know them." For it is possible to find some virtuous persons living among heretics. But among the corrupted of whom I speak it is in no way possible. "So what difference does it make," Jesus says in effect, "if even among these false prophets some do put on a hypocritical show of virtue? Certainly they will soon be detected easily." The nature of this road upon which he commanded us to walk is toilsome and hard. The hypocrite would seldom choose to toil but would prefer only to make a show. For this very reason the hypocrite is easily detected. When Jesus notes that "there are few who find it" [v. 14], he distinguishes these from those who do not find the way yet pretend to find it. So do not look to the mask but to the behavioral fruits of those who pursue the narrow way. **THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, HOMILY 23.6.**

7:21-23 CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA: There may be some who, in the beginning, believed rightly and assiduously labored at virtue. They may have even worked miracles and prophesied and cast out demons. And yet later they are found turning aside to evil, to self-assertive deception and desire. Of these Jesus remarks that he "never knew them." He

ranks them as equivalent to those who were never known by him at all. Even if they at the outset had lived virtuously, they ended up condemned. God knows those whom he loves, and he loves those who single-mindedly believe in him and do the things that please him.

FRAGMENT 88.

7:28-29 CHRYSOSTOM: Surely it was logical that they were in pain over the heavy weight of what he had said. They were stunned by the soaring level of the requirements that he had made. But now the strength of the one teaching was so great that he seized many of them and threw them into great amazement. Because of their pleasure in what he said, Jesus finally persuaded them not to leave as he finished speaking. For not even after he went down from the mountain did the hearers leave, but even then the whole audience followed him because of the great love that was shown in what he had said. But most of all they were astounded at his authority. For when he said these things, he did not refer to another, as even the prophet Moses did, but everywhere he showed that he himself was the One who had the authority to decide. For even when he was establishing laws Jesus continually added, "But I say to you" [see Mt 5:44]. And when he was reminding them of

the final day of judgment, he showed that he himself is the One who will bring justice, both through the punishments and through the honors. This is what made such a commotion among them.

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, HOMILY 25.1.

8:3 CHRYSOSTOM: Jesus did not say, "Be clean," but rather responded to the leper's assumption, saying, "I will. Be clean." This left no doubt as to whether the leper's assumption was correct. Jesus simply approved it.

The apostles would speak from an entirely different assumption when they later said to the amazed crowd [in Ac 3:12], "Why do you stare at us as though by our own power or piety we have made him walk?" The Lord, who often spoke with modesty, obscuring his own glory, speaks here in a way so as to establish the opinion of those who were amazed at his authority: "I will. Be clean." Many and great were the signs that he would offer, but only here has he uttered this distinctive word about his own authority. Jesus confirmed the assumption with respect to his authority by purposely adding, "I will." The important thing was not that he said this but that he responded approvingly to what was being said and confirmed it. The cleansing followed immediately. **THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, HOMILY 25.1.**

A CENTURION'S FAITH

⁵ When he entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, pleading with him, ⁶ "Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, in terrible agony."

⁷ He said to him, "Am I to come and heal him?" ^a

⁸ "Lord," the centurion replied, "I am not worthy to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed. ⁹ For I too am a man under authority, having soldiers under my command. ^b I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this!' and he does it."

¹⁰ Hearing this, Jesus was amazed and said to those following him, "Truly I tell you, I have not found anyone in Israel with so great a faith."

¹¹ I tell you that many will come from east and west to share the banquet ^c with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. ¹² But the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." ¹³ Then Jesus told the centurion, "Go. As you have believed, let it be done for you." And his servant was healed that very moment. ^d

HEALINGS AT CAPERNAUM

¹⁴ Jesus went into Peter's house and saw his mother-in-law lying in bed with a fever. ¹⁵ So

he touched her hand, and the fever left her. Then she got up and began to serve him. ¹⁶ When evening came, they brought to him many who were demon-possessed. He drove out the spirits with a word and healed all who were sick, ¹⁷ so that what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

**He himself took our weaknesses
and carried our diseases.** ^e

THE COST OF FOLLOWING JESUS

¹⁸ When Jesus saw a large crowd ^f around him, he gave the order to go to the other side of the sea. ¹⁹ A scribe approached him and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go."

²⁰ Jesus told him, "Foxes have dens, and birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."

²¹ "Lord," another of his disciples said, "first let me go bury my father."

²² But Jesus told him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

WIND AND WAVES OBEY JESUS

²³ As he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. ²⁴ Suddenly, a violent storm arose on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves — but Jesus kept sleeping. ²⁵ So the

^a 8:7 Or "I will come and heal him." ^b 8:9 Lit *under me* ^c 8:11 Lit *recline at the table* ^d 8:13 Or *that hour*; lit *very hour*

^e 8:17 Is 53:4 ^f 8:18 Other mss read *saw large crowds*

8:7 CHRYSOSTOM: What did Jesus do? Something he had never done before. While on previous occasions he had responded to the wish of his supplicants, in this case he rather springs actively toward it. He offers not only to heal him but also to come to his house. By this we learn of the centurion's excellent faith. For if he had not made this offer but rather had said, "Go your way, let your servant be healed," we would not have known these things. **THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, HOMILY 26.1.**

8:13 IRENAEUS: There is no coercion with God. He has a good will toward us continually. He gives reliable counsel to humans and angels (who also are rational beings), to whom he has given the power of choice. Those who yield obedience therefore possess what is good freely and justly. It is given by God but preserved by themselves. . . . The human spirit is possessed of free will from the beginning, and God is possessed of free will, in whose likeness humanity was created. Humanity is advised to hold fast to the good and thereby be responsive to God. This refers not only to works but

faith as well. God preserved the human will free and under his own self-control . . . as is shown in Jesus's word to the centurion: "Go. Be it done for you as you have believed." **AGAINST HERESIES 3.37.1, 4–5.**

8:18 CHRYSOSTOM: Note once again his freedom from superficialities. [Jesus] charged the devils not to disclose his identity. He commanded the multitudes to depart. In doing so, he was training all his followers in self-constraint and teaching them to do nothing for display. At the same time he was silencing the envy of his detractors. He thereby showed that he was not a healer of bodies only but also of souls, and a teacher of forbearance. He demonstrated this by first healing their diseases and then by teaching them not to do anything merely for vanity's sake. The crowds meanwhile were clinging to him, loving him, marveling at him, desiring to be with him. For who would want to depart from one who performed such miracles? Who would not long to linger there, even if it were only to glimpse his face and the mouth that was saying

such things? **THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, HOMILY 27.2.**

8:23 CHRYSOSTOM: [Jesus] took the disciples with him, not for nothing and not merely to face an absurd hazard but in order to permit them to witness the miracle that was to take place on the sea. For like a superb trainer, he was gradually coaching and fitting them for endurance. He had two objectives in mind. He wanted to teach them to remain undismayed amid dangers and modest in honors. So, to prevent them from thinking too much of themselves, having sent away the multitude, he kept them near him but permitted them to be tossed with a tempest. By doing so he disciplined them to bear trials patiently. His former miracles were indeed great, but this one contained a unique kind of discipline of exceptional importance. For it was a sign akin to that of old. To do this, he took his disciples with him by himself. He permitted others to see his other miracles, but when trials and terrors were rising, he took with him none but those he was training to be champions of the gospel.

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, HOMILY 28.1.

disciples came and woke him up, saying, "Lord, save us! We're going to die!"

²⁶ He said to them, "Why are you afraid, you of little faith?" Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm.

²⁷ The men were amazed and asked, "What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the sea obey him!"

DEMONS DRIVEN OUT BY JESUS

²⁸ When he had come to the other side, to the region of the Gadarenes,^A two demon-possessed men met him as they came out of the tombs. They were so violent that no one could pass that way. ²⁹ Suddenly they shouted, "What do you have to do with us,^B Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?"

³⁰ A long way off from them, a large herd of pigs was feeding. ³¹ "If you drive us out," the demons begged him, "send us into the herd of pigs."

³² "Go!" he told them. So when they had come out, they entered the pigs, and the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea and perished in the water. ³³ Then the men who tended them fled. They went into the city and reported everything, especially what had happened to those who were demon-possessed. ³⁴ At that, the whole town went out to meet Jesus. When they saw him, they begged him to leave their region.

THE SON OF MAN FORGIVES AND HEALS

9 So he got into a boat, crossed over, and came to his own town. ² Just then some men^C brought to him a paralytic lying on a stretcher. Seeing their faith, Jesus told the paralytic, "Have courage, son, your sins are forgiven."

³ At this, some of the scribes said to themselves, "He's blaspheming!"

⁴ Perceiving their thoughts, Jesus said, "Why are you thinking evil things in your hearts?"

⁵ For which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? ⁶ But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" — then he told the paralytic, "Get up, take your stretcher, and go home." ⁷ So he got up and went home. ⁸ When the crowds saw this, they were awestruck^{E,F} and gave glory to God, who had given such authority to men.

THE CALL OF MATTHEW

⁹ As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the toll booth, and he said to him, "Follow me," and he got up and followed him.

¹⁰ While he was reclining at the table in the house, many tax collectors and sinners came to eat with Jesus and his disciples. ¹¹ When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples,

^A 8:28 Other mss read *Gergesenes* ^B 8:29 Other mss add *Jesus* ^C 9:2 Lit *then they* ^D 9:4 Or *minds*

^E 9:8 Other mss read *amazed* ^F 9:8 Lit *afraid*

8:24-25 PETER CHRYSOLOGUS: The disciples' efforts as seamen had failed, as they could see. The seas attempted to spend their fury against them, and the waves were ready to swallow them. The twisting winds had conspired against them. So they ran in fear to the very Pilot of the world, the Ruler of the universe, the Master of the elements. They begged him to check the billows, banish the danger, save them in their despair. **SERMONS 20.1.**

8:30-32 CHROMATIUS OF AQUILEIA: The swine to which the demons fled symbolize the unfaithful and unclean people who, feeding at some distance by the sea, were living according to the sins of the world. Thus the swine showed themselves to be a ready residence for the demons. Living nearby this worldly sea they are steeped in error and inordinate desire. This made it easy for them to be overcome by the demons. **TRACTATE ON MATTHEW 43.5.**

9:2 PETER CHRYSOLOGUS: Note in this regard, my brothers, that God does not

inquire into the wants of those who are deliriously ill. He does not wait to see the faith of the ignorant or probe the senseless wishes of the sick. Yet he does not refuse to *help* the faith of another, so that by grace alone he confers whatever is proper of the divine will. In fact, my brothers, when does a doctor ever inquire into or examine the wishes of those who are ailing, for a patient is prone to be of a contrary mind in his wishes and demands? **SERMONS 50.4.**

9:6 HILARY OF POITIERS: So it could be understood that he was in a body and that he could forgive sins and restore health to bodies, Jesus said, "That you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins," then he said to the paralytic, "Arise, take up your pallet." He could have simply said "Arise," but since the reason for doing every work had to be explained, he added, "Take up your pallet and go home." First he granted remission of sins; next he showed his ability to restore health. Then, with the taking up of the pallet,

he made it clear that bodies would be free from infirmity and suffering; lastly, with the paralytic's return to his home, he showed that believers are being given back the way to paradise from which Adam, the parent of all, who became profligate from the stain of sin, had proceeded. **ON MATTHEW 8.7.**

9:10-13 JEROME: The Lord went to the banquet of sinners that he might have an opportunity to teach and to offer spiritual food to his hosts. In effect, when he is mentioned as frequently going out to attend feasts, nothing is said other than what he did there and taught there. Thus, we see both the Lord's humility in reaching out to sinners and the force of his teaching in converting penitents. What follows: "I desire mercy, and not sacrifice" and "I came not to call the righteous but sinners" (as he cites testimony from the prophet) challenged the scribes and Pharisees, who considered themselves righteous and shunned both publicans and sinners. **COMMENTARY ON MATTHEW 1.9.13.**

"Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

¹² Now when he heard this, he said, "It is not those who are well who need a doctor, but those who are sick. ¹³ Go and learn what this means: **I desire mercy and not sacrifice.**^a For I didn't come to call the righteous, but sinners."^b

A QUESTION ABOUT FASTING

¹⁴ Then John's disciples came to him, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but your disciples do not fast?"

¹⁵ Jesus said to them, "Can the wedding guests^c be sad while the groom is with them? The time^d will come when the groom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast. ¹⁶ No one patches an old garment with unshrunk cloth, because the patch pulls away from the garment and makes the tear worse. ¹⁷ And no one puts^e new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the skins burst, the wine spills out, and the skins are ruined. No, they put new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved."

A GIRL RESTORED AND A WOMAN HEALED

¹⁸ As he was telling them these things, suddenly one of the leaders came and knelt down before him, saying, "My daughter just died,^f but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live."^g ¹⁹ So Jesus and his disciples got up and followed him.

²⁰ Just then, a woman who had suffered from bleeding for twelve years approached from behind and touched the end of his robe,^h ²¹ for she

said to herself, "If I can just touch his robe, I'll be made well."^g

²² Jesus turned and saw her. "Have courage, daughter," he said. "Your faith has saved you."^h And the woman was made well from that moment.ⁱ

²³ When Jesus came to the leader's house, he saw the flute players and a crowd lamenting loudly. ²⁴ "Leave," he said, "because the girl is not dead but asleep." And they laughed at him. ²⁵ After the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl got up. ²⁶ Then news of this spread throughout that whole area.

HEALING THE BLIND

²⁷ As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed him, calling out, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!"

²⁸ When he entered the house, the blind men approached him, and Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I can do this?"

They said to him, "Yes, Lord."

²⁹ Then he touched their eyes, saying, "Let it be done for you according to your faith."^g ³⁰ And their eyes were opened. Then Jesus warned them sternly, "Be sure that no one finds out."

³¹ But they went out and spread the news about him throughout that whole area.

DRIVING OUT A DEMON

³² Just as they were going out, a demon-possessed man who was unable to speak was brought to him. ³³ When the demon had been driven out, the

^a 9:13 Hs 6:6 ^b 9:13 Other mss add to repentance ^c 9:15 Lit the sons of the bridal chamber ^d 9:15 Lit days ^e 9:17 Lit And they do not put ^f 9:18 Lit daughter has now come to the end ^g 9:21 Or be saved ^h 9:22 Or has made you well ⁱ 9:22 Lit hour

9:20 JEROME: The Gospel according to Luke says that the ruler's daughter was [about] twelve years old [Lk 8:42]. Note also that the woman concerned, who was from the Gentiles, began to get sick at a place believed to be in a Jewish district. Except by way of contrast between physical conditions, the girl's ailment is not indicated. As for the woman who had a hemorrhage, she approached the Lord not in her home or in the town (because according to the law she was excluded from towns) but while the Lord was walking by, so that in the course of [his] going to one woman, another was cured. The apostles say in this regard, "It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken first to you. Since you judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles" [Ac 13:46]. **COMMENTARY ON MATTHEW 1.9.20.**

9:27 HILARY OF POITIERS: Two blind men follow[ed] the Lord as he was passing by. But if they could not see, how could the blind men know of the Lord's departure as well as his name? Moreover, they called him "Son of David" and asked to be made well. In the two blind men, the entire earlier prefiguration is complete. The ruler's daughter seems to be from these people, namely, the Pharisees and John's disciples, who already made common cause in testing the Lord. To these unknowing persons the law gave evidence as to the one from whom they sought a cure. It indicated to them that their Savior in the flesh was of the line of David. It also introduced light to the minds of those who were blind from past sins. They could not see Christ but were told about him. The Lord showed them that

faith should not be expected as a result of health but health should be expected because of faith. The blind men saw because they believed; they did not believe because they saw. From this we understand that what is requested must be predicated on faith and that faith must not be exercised because of what has been obtained. If they should believe, he offers them sight. **ON MATTHEW 9.9.**

9:32-33 JEROME: What is called in Greek *kophos* is more commonly known as deaf rather than [mute], but the Scriptures indiscriminately use *kophos* to mean [mute] or deaf. Spiritually, just as the blind men receive light, so too the . . . man's tongue is loosened that he may speak and give glory to him whom he once rejected. **COMMENTARY ON MATTHEW 1.9.33.**

man who had been mute spoke, and the crowds were amazed, saying, "Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel!"

³⁴ But the Pharisees said, "He drives out demons by the ruler of the demons."

THE LORD OF THE HARVEST

³⁵ Jesus continued going around to all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every^A disease and every sickness.^{B,C}

³⁶ When he saw the crowds, he felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dejected, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷ Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few. ³⁸ Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest."

COMMISSIONING THE TWELVE

10 Summoning his twelve disciples, he gave them authority over unclean spirits, to drive them out and to heal every^A disease and sickness.^C ² These are the names of the twelve apos-

les: First, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; ³ Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus;^D ⁴ Simon the Zealot,^E and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.

⁵ Jesus sent out these twelve after giving them instructions: "Don't take the road that leads to the Gentiles, and don't enter any Samaritan town. ⁶ Instead, go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. ⁷ As you go, proclaim: 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.' ⁸ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those with leprosy,^F drive out demons. Freely you received, freely give. ⁹ Don't acquire gold, silver, or copper for your money-belts. ¹⁰ Don't take a traveling bag for the road, or an extra shirt, sandals, or a staff, for the worker is worthy of his food. ¹¹ When you enter any town or village, find out who is worthy, and stay there until you leave. ¹² Greet a household when you enter it, ¹³ and if the household is worthy, let your peace be on it; but if it is unworthy, let your peace return to you. ¹⁴ If anyone does not welcome you or listen to your words,

^A 9:35; 10:1 Or every kind of ^B 9:35 Other mss add among the people ^C 9:35; 10:1 Or physical ailment

^D 10:3 Other mss read and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus ^E 10:4 Lit the Cananaean

^F 10:8 Gk leprosy; a term for various skin diseases; see Lv 13-14

9:36 HILARY OF POITIERS: No instigator had stirred up the crowds. They were not harassed and helpless because of some mishap or disturbance. So why is Jesus so moved with compassion for these people? Clearly the Lord has pity on these people held in the sway of an unclean spirit and burdened by the law, because no shepherd was about to restore to them the guardianship of the Holy Spirit. The fruit of this gift was indeed potentially abundant but not yet harvested by anyone. The bounty of the Spirit overwhelms the multitude of those who take hold of it. For no matter how much it is gathered by everyone, it abounds in fruitfulness. And because it is good to have many people through whom he is served, [Christ] orders his disciples to pray to the Lord of the harvest to send forth as many laborers as possible into the harvest. He prays that God may bestow an abundance of reapers to take hold of what the gift of the Holy Spirit was preparing. Through prayer and exhortation, God pours out this gift upon us. **ON MATTHEW 10.2.**

9:37 JEROME: An abundant harvest signified the multitude of people. The few laborers signified the dearth of teachers. He commands them to ask the Lord of the harvest to send out la-

borers into his harvest. These are the laborers of whom the psalmist speaks: "May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy! He that goes forth weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, bringing his sheaves with him" [Ps 126:6]. And that I may speak in broader terms: an abundant harvest represents all the believing multitude. The few laborers imply the apostles and their imitators who are sent to the harvest. **COMMENTARY ON MATTHEW 1.9,37.**

10:1-4 JEROME: The kind and merciful Lord and Master does not begrudge his followers and disciples their powers. Even as he had healed every disease and every infirmity, he empowered his apostles to heal every disease and every infirmity. But there is a great gap between having and granting, between giving and receiving. Whatever he does, he does in the power of the Lord. Whatever they do, they display their own weakness and the power of the Lord, saying, "In the name of Jesus, arise and walk" [see Ac 3:6] It must be noted, further, that the power to work miracles is granted to the apostles even to the twelfth man. **COMMENTARY ON MATTHEW 1.10.1.**

10:8 HILARY OF POITIERS: All the power possessed by the Lord is bestowed

upon the apostles! Those who were prefigured in the image and likeness of God in Adam have now received the perfect image and likeness of Christ. They have been given powers in no way different from those of the Lord. Those once earthbound now become heaven-centered. They will proclaim that the kingdom of heaven is at hand, that the image and likeness of God are now appropriated in the company of truth, so that all the holy ones who have been made heirs of heaven may reign with the Lord. Let them cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers and cast out devils. Whatever impairment Adam's body had incurred from being goaded on by Satan, let the apostles wipe away through their sharing in the Lord's power. **ON MATTHEW 10.4.**

10:10 CHRYSOSTOM: By saying "the laborer deserves his food," Jesus is not implying that every door will be opened to you. Rather, this saying requires great prudence. It will profit you both with respect to your reputation and for meeting your needs. His meaning is that you will be given food in due season insofar as you are worthy of it. And you will be worthy of it if you ask for nothing beyond mere necessities. **THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, HOMILY 32.5.**

shake the dust off your feet when you leave that house or town. ¹⁵ Truly I tell you, it will be more tolerable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for that town.

PERSECUTIONS PREDICTED

¹⁶ “Look, I’m sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as serpents and as innocent as doves. ¹⁷ Beware of them, because they will hand you over to local courts^a and flog you in their synagogues. ¹⁸ You will even be brought before governors and kings because of me, to bear witness to them and to the Gentiles. ¹⁹ But when they hand you over, don’t worry about how or what you are to speak. For you will be given what to say at that hour, ²⁰ because it isn’t you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father is speaking through you.

²¹ “Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child. Children will rise up against parents and have them put to death. ²² You will be hated by everyone because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. ²³ When they persecute you in one town, flee to another. For truly I tell you, you will not have gone through the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes. ²⁴ A disciple^b is not above his teacher, or a slave above his master. ²⁵ It is enough for a disciple to become like his teach-

er and a slave like his master. If they called the head of the house ‘Beelzebul,’ how much more the members of his household!

FEAR GOD

²⁶ “Therefore, don’t be afraid of them, since there is nothing covered that won’t be uncovered and nothing hidden that won’t be made known. ²⁷ What I tell you in the dark, speak in the light. What you hear in a whisper,^c proclaim on the housetops. ²⁸ Don’t fear those who kill the body but are not able to kill the soul; rather, fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹ Aren’t two sparrows sold for a penny?^d Yet not one of them falls to the ground without your Father’s consent. ³⁰ But even the hairs of your head have all been counted. ³¹ So don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

ACKNOWLEDGING CHRIST

³² “Therefore, everyone who will acknowledge me before others, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. ³³ But whoever denies me before others, I will also deny him before my Father in heaven. ³⁴ Don’t assume that I came to bring peace on the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵ For I came to turn
a man against his father,
a daughter against her mother,

^a 10:17 Or *sanhedrins* ^b 10:24 Or *student* ^c 10:27 Lit *in the ear* ^d 10:29 Gk *assarion*, a small copper coin
^e 10:29 Lit *ground apart from your Father*

10:16-20 CHRYSOSTOM: He is teaching them a new sort of warfare. He sends them out exposed, with only one coat [each], barefoot and without a staff, without clothing or provisions [see v. 9-10]. The manner of their battle array is entirely unimpressive. He calls them to allow themselves to be totally supported by the generosity of such as receive them [v. 11]. All this is to accentuate his unspeakable power. Then, to press this reverse strategy to its limits, he tells them to exhibit the gentleness of sheep, even though they are going out among wolves, and not simply toward the wolves but trustfully moving right into the midst of the wolves. **THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, HOMILY 33.1.**

10:24 THEODORE OF MOPSUESTIA: It is truly said that a disciple is not above his teacher according to his nature. For he who is made like his teacher by adoption can never go beyond his nature, but to be made like his teacher is the highest end he can reach. It is also for this reason that Jesus says there is only one teacher, and that teacher is

himself. For the teachers among humans are more like routinely stamped images of teachers than like true ones, as each of them teaches what he himself takes for granted. One will make more progress if one is reconciled to the good that has already been given.

FRAGMENT 53.

10:27 EUSEBIUS OF EMESA: But someone may ask, “If it is good to speak in the light, why did he himself speak in darkness? And if it is good to preach from the housetops, why did he himself quietly speak into their ears?” [Jesus] keeps quiet because it is timely, but he instructs the disciples to proclaim and preach his words. He is not afraid—it is, rather, for ignorant people to fear the Lord Jesus. He is carefully managing his speech, much like a steward manages money. At times he keeps silent and at other appropriate times he speaks openly. **HOMILY 27.3.**

10:28 THEODORE OF MOPSUESTIA: When Jesus says “hell,” he is emphasizing that punishment there is eternal. By “hell” he means the condemnation

awaiting those who receive recompense according to their life.

His choice of words shows that there is a great difference between the two things. He first says “kill” but next says “destroy,” and from destruction there is no longer any salvation. **FRAGMENT 56.**

10:34 CHRYSOSTOM: What sort of peace is it that Jesus asks them to pronounce upon entering each house? And what kind of peace is it of which the angels sing [in Lk 2:14], “Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace”? And if Jesus came not to bring peace, why did all the prophets publish peace as good news? Because this more than anything is peace: when the disease is removed. This is peace: when the cancer is cut away. Only with such radical surgery is it possible for heaven to be reunited to earth. Only in this way does the physician preserve the healthy tissue of the body. The incurable part must be amputated. Only in this way does the military commander preserve the peace: by cutting off those in rebellion.

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, HOMILY 35.1.

a daughter-in-law against
her mother-in-law;

³⁶ and a man's enemies will be
the members of his household.^A

³⁷ The one who loves a father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; the one who loves a son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.³⁸ And whoever doesn't take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.³⁹ Anyone who finds his life will lose it, and anyone who loses his life because of me will find it.

A CUP OF COLD WATER

⁴⁰ "The one who welcomes you welcomes me, and the one who welcomes me welcomes him who sent me.⁴¹ Anyone who welcomes a prophet because he is a prophet^B will receive a prophet's reward. And anyone who welcomes a righteous person because he's righteous^C will receive a righteous person's reward.⁴² And whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is a disciple,^D truly I tell you, he will never lose his reward."

JOHN THE BAPTIST DOUBTS

11 When Jesus had finished giving instructions to his twelve disciples, he moved on from there to teach and preach in their towns.² Now when John heard in prison what the

Christ was doing, he sent a message through his disciples³ and asked him, "Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?"

⁴ Jesus replied to them, "Go and report to John what you hear and see:⁵ The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with leprosy^E are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor are told the good news,⁶ and blessed is the one who isn't offended by me."

⁷ As these men were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swaying in the wind? ⁸ What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothes? See, those who wear soft clothes are in royal palaces.⁹ What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.¹⁰ This is the one about whom it is written:

See, I am sending my messenger
ahead of you;

he will prepare your way before you.^F

¹¹ "Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one greater than John the Baptist has appeared,^G but the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.¹² From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been suffering violence,^H and the violent have been seizing it by force.¹³ For all the prophets

^A10:35-36 Mc 7:6 ^B10:41 Lit prophet in the name of a prophet ^C10:41 Lit person in the name of a righteous person

^D10:42 Lit little ones in the name of a disciple ^E11:5 Gk leprosy; a term for various skin diseases; see Lv 13-14

^F11:10 Mal 3:1 ^G11:11 Lit arisen ^H11:12 Or has been forcefully advancing

10:40-42 JEROME: Jesus said, "He who receives you receives me." But there are many false prophets and false preachers who perhaps make this doctrine difficult. He has also cured this stumbling block by saying, "He who receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous man's reward." Then again, someone may object and say, "I am prevented by poverty. My own lack prevents me from acting as a host." Jesus eliminated this excuse, too, by the easily fulfilled command that we should offer a cup of cold water with our whole heart. He said "cold water" rather than "hot water" so that we could not object because of our poverty or lack of fuel for hot water. . . . [T]he apostle gave a similar instruction to the Galatians: "Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches" [Gl 6:6]. He admonishes disciples to give refreshment to their teachers because before he had specified this, it was possible

for anyone to plead poverty and avoid the instruction. He clears up this important doubt when he says, "God is not mocked, for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap" [Gl 6:7]. Paul means, "If you plead poverty but know in your conscience that the case is otherwise, your excuse accomplishes nothing. You can disobey my admonitions, but be warned that you will reap exactly what you have sown." **COMMENTARY ON MATTHEW 1.10.40-42.**

11:7 GREGORY THE GREAT: [Jesus] did not expect assent to this but denial. As soon as a slight breeze blows on a reed it bends away. What does the reed represent if not an unspiritual soul? As soon as it is touched by praise or slander, it turns in every direction. If a slight breeze of commendation comes from someone's mouth, it is cheerful and proud, and it bends completely, so to speak, toward being pleasant. But if a gust of slander comes from the source from which the breeze of praise was coming,

it is quickly turned in the opposite direction, toward raving anger. John was no reed, shaken by the wind. No one's pleasant attitude made him agreeable, and no one's anger made him bitter.

FORTY GOSPEL HOMILIES 6.2.

11:10-11 JEROME: John is greater than the other prophets for this reason: the other prophets predicted to John that someone was to come, but John pointed out with his finger that he had indeed come, saying, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world" [Jn 1:29]. And he reached not only the rank of a prophet but even to that of Baptist, by baptizing his Lord. This heightened his significance. He thereby fulfilled the prophecy of Malachi in which an angel is foretold [see Mal 3:1]. John belonged to the order of the angels not by nature but by the importance of his task. It means he was the messenger who would announce the coming of the Lord. **COMMENTARY ON MATTHEW 2.11.9.**